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05



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INTRO



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It's been a long time coming but we're pleased to finally bring you our comprehensive WRX STI road-test. In fact, describing the feature as a road-test really doesn't cut it. What we've endeavoured to do is cover all the bases. We've put the latest Subaru through its paces on the road and on track. And because most WRXs end up in the hands of dedicated enthusiasts (and therefore modified), we've explored the tuning potential of the car, too. We took one to Roger Clark Motorsport for the brothers to examine and give us their professional opinions, which certainly proved eye-opening. Get on over to p44 for the full review.

Mostly this month, though, Sam and I have been out enjoying cars, which isn't something we often get time to do! Sam took his EP3 to Santa Pod to enjoy some bracket racing. What does bracket racing involve? Well, essentially you get to gun it down an infamous quarter-mile strip of Tarmac over and over but instead of the focus being on ultimate times, the key is consistency. You can read all about it on p92 but Sam's now done a track day at Castle Combe and timed his car at the Pod. With a starting point logged, the performance enhancers will now be added one by one, allowing him to monitor exactly how effective each addition is.

As for me, well, I've been out playing in the Banzai/Pettit Racing RX-8. I headed to North Weald for a Car Limits action day, organised by the RX-8 Owners' Club. With the stock wheels shod in shonky old tyres, grip levels were minimal on the greasy wet airfield surface, which only added to the fun piloting the well-balanced RWD Mazda. It was a proper riot, probably the most fun I've had in a car in quite some time.

With both of us itching for more, we also signed up for a RallyMaster day at Brands Hatch. Brands has just replaced its FWD Peugeot rally cars with RWD GT86s so we just had to have a play. Over the course of a morning we learned so much from our experienced instructor that we both now feel like better drivers for going. The undulating circuit we navigated was hugely exhilarating and we can't recommend the experience/training day enough. Read all about our experience on p78 and get yourself signed up at the earliest possible opportunity.

This month, then, has really highlighted to us the importance of getting out and actually enjoying our cars. Instead of just thinking about shows and spending all of our hard-earned on shiny bits, we want to make sure we get to truly enjoy our passion. This year we'll be aiming to improve our skills as drivers and making sure the parts we fit to our project cars bring significant, noticeable performance gains. That's what it's all about isn't it? Enjoy the issue...

Andy Basoo, Editor

BANZAI



COVER: JC Pepino

EDITOR: Andy Basoo

FEATURES WRITER: Sam Preston

ADVERTISEMENT SALES MANAGER: Cinnamon Lacey

SUB EDITORS: Christian Shelton, Rachael Willson

SENIOR DESIGNER: Aaron Batson

DESIGNERS: Dave Powney, Tom Jackson

RETOUCHER: Laurence Green

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Jo Claydon-Smith

REPROGRAPHIC CONTROLLER: Marion Jenkins

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR: Helen Lawson

CONTRIBUTORS: Adam Ivell, Chris Wallbank,

Joe Clifford, Dave 'DJ' Jones, Dave Powney, Stephen Hall, Tony Saggiu, JC Pepino, Gary Hawkins, Steve McCann, Ian Blackett, Daniel Bevis, Paul Cowland

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Editorial, advertising & subscriptions enquiries

Banzai, Unity Media plc, Becket House,

Vestry Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 5EJ

Tel: 01732 748000 Fax: 01732 748001

Editorial Email: banzai@unity-media.com

Advertising Email: clacey@unity-media.com

Web: www.banzaimagazine.com

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Jorge Sandoval's Civics keep getting targeted by thieves – but every single time he comes back stronger. And hey, they won't be able to catch him in this one...



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ACTING ON IMPULSE

We meet the man who is living an enhanced reality after taking the plunge and buying his dream FD3S Mazda RX-7

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BANZAI PRESENTS: ULTIMATE HONDA COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL

Exciting news from Banzai this month: ten years after our first collector's special edition (*Ultimate Nissan*) was released, our *Ultimate Honda* bookazine is now available to buy for a limited time! Along with a comprehensive introduction and history to all things Honda, we've also hand-picked some of the finest

feature cars from the last couple of years to sport the 'H' badge to create an unbeatable homage to the legendary manufacturer. From a highly modified Mk1 Civic to the new NSX and everything in between, *Ultimate Honda* illustrates how versatile Honda road and race cars can be. It is available exclusively from

WHSmith in the UK and in selected stores across the USA and Australia or you can order a digital or print version online at www.banzaimagazine.com from anywhere in the world. These limited-edition issues won't be around forever, so grab yours now!

PRICE: £8.99

TORQUE PRO

Here's a neat app that could save you a lot of money if you like keeping an eye on how your car is performing behind-the-scenes. Torque Pro uses data from the OBD2 port from your car (OBD2 Bluetooth adaptor sold separately) to supply real-time information to your Android phone. Using the highly detailed GPS trackers found in modern phones, you can accurately record 0-60mph times, power output and even determine fault codes from the car's computer. What's more,

you can overlay this information over live video from the phone's camera. This could be great for when you're out on track and want to see how each aspect of your car is performing at any given time. This clever app is an affordable alternative to downloading the complicated and sluggish software that does a similar job on your laptop.

PRICE: £2.95 from the Google Play store (OBD2 Bluetooth adaptor sold separately)

CONTACT: www.torque-bhp.com

'CHUTE TO THRILL

This one's for the big-power Supra Mk4 owners... A removable parachute mount from the legendary stateside tuner Titan Motorsports. The stunningly designed and ultra-strong unit comes with easy fitting instructions, is capable of being attached to the car's standard bumper and allows the car to still look completely stock when removed with the numberplate put back in place. Stealthy!

This is definitely worth considering if your car tends to creep over the 150mph mark at the strip, especially if you still run it on the road, too! The mount comes pre-powdercoated in either black or silver.

PRICE: £263.01

CONTACT: www.titanmotorsports.com



SOFA, SO GOOD

Forget the endless, boring 'sale' adverts you see on TV every night if you're in the market for a new sofa, and instead, do yourself a massive favour and head over to the Cobra Seats website to check out the brand's newly released and rather ingenious Classic Sofa!

This one is a real no-brainer for car fans – essentially a stretched 'Classic' bucket seat that caters for two or three people, finished to the usual high standards that we've come to expect from Cobra's car seats. In fact, you'll have to pull some forces over 35G before this couch begins to show signs of weaknesses. Overkill for a sofa? Perhaps... but at least you can sit safe in the knowledge it's not going to collapse underneath you anytime soon!

Of course, as with all of its car seats, Cobra can customise this beauty in any way you see fit.

PRICE: From £699

CONTACT: www.cobraseats.com



COVER ALL BASES

Subarus are hardy little vehicles. Coming from Fuji Heavy Industries, the brand's cars are well known for being capable in almost all conditions. This doesn't always spell good news for the interiors, however, with countless muddy dog walks and rambles in the countryside often taking their toll on the insides of older cars.

If this has been playing on your mind, Subaru UK might now have you quite literally covered, with its new range of tailored heavy-duty seat covers for all of its vehicles.

The easily fitted covers are fully impervious to liquid, and also still allow all in-seat airbags to work effectively. So get out there and use your Subaru as it was fully intended, without the niggling though of interior damage playing on your mind!

PRICE: From £27.50

CONTACT: www.subaru.co.uk

THE WHEEL DEAL

Wheels maketh the car, or so the '70s stickers used to say. The Wheel Whores crew obviously agree with that statement (well, they would!) so they decided to produce this rather cool T-shirt. It's available in black, in loads of sizes. Check out the website for more information.

PRICE: £25

CONTACT: www.wheel-whores.com



LITCHFIELD GETS NEW DYNO

Legendary GT-R tuner Litchfield has celebrated the expansion of its Gloucestershire workshop by treating itself to a brand-new state-of-the-art dyno – thought to be one of the most capable dyno cells in the entire country.

The Maha unit can easily handle the 1200+bhp builds that the company has become famous for, using a bespoke underground cooling system for ultimate accuracy. Iain Litchfield commented on the news: "We're delighted to have this superb facility in-house now. Not only does it mean that we can lavish even more care and attention on each customer's car, without having to use external facilities, but it also means that we can add extra layers of development to all of our tuning packages."

CONTACT: www.litchfieldmotors.co.uk



READY TO RUMBLE...

This Revolution RS exhaust from GReddy is designed with boosted 350Zs in mind. The full 3" cat-back system features a dual resonator crossover pipe to control sound and offer perfect exhaust pressures, while the 150mm tips fit perfectly in the OEM bumper cut-outs.

GReddy hastens to add that the stainless steel system will also work wonders for naturally aspirated cars!

PRICE: £1295

CONTACT: www.greddy.com

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Like to make a statement even when you're out on the race track? Demon Tweeks has come up with a fantastic new service allowing you to customise your Sparco race suit before you buy it, using a range of pre-determined colours and designs, or using your very own designs if you're feeling really creative!

If you do a lot of track days and like to stand out, these reasonably priced suits are a no-brainer. Just try to resist the urge to wear yours to the pub afterwards...

PRICE: POA

CONTACT: www.demon-tweeks.co.uk

ON TRACK FOR FUN

If you've got a birthday for a driving-obsessed loved one coming up, or just fancy treating yourself, the guys at MSV currently have some great deals on for entry to their range of circuits.

With Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Cadwell Park and Bedford Autodrome as part of its portfolio, MSV offers thoughtful gifts such as track day vouchers and show passes for its vast range of shows which have only just begun this year. Check out the website for full info on what bargains you can grab!

CONTACT: www.msv.com



NEW WHEELS

SPEEDLINE SL1 IMPERATORE

SIZES: 18-19" diameter, various widths

NOTES: Brand-new style from highly respected Italian manufacturer, using the very latest technologies

PRICE: From £310 per wheel

CONTACT: www.speedlinecorse.co.uk



BBS CI-R

SIZES: 20" diameter, various widths

NOTES: Fresh from the Geneva Motor Show, this lightweight, Y-spoke rim is designed for only the most premium of cars!

PRICE: From £390.14 per wheel

CONTACT: www.bbs.com



DOTZ THUNDER

SIZES: 17-19" diameter, all with an 8" width

NOTES: New one-piece rim featuring five single and five double spokes, said to convey "action, power and dynamics".

PRICE: POA

CONTACT: www.dotzmag.com



BC FORGED HBZ10

SIZES: 19-21" diameter in various widths

NOTES: New two-piece forged wheel from the guys behind BC Racing coilovers. Custom-made to order

PRICE: From £4025.80 per set

CONTACT: www.bcforgedwheels.co.uk



BLOX PARTY

Our friends over at Tarmac Sportz have a treat for fans of everything neo chrome: a limited run of Blox Racing Type R gear knobs in the futuristic colour scheme.

The CNC-machined billet beauties are said to be perfectly weighted for super-fast shifts, the teardrop shape fitting perfectly in your palm. Applications are available for most Japanese cars with five- or six-speeds.

PRICE: £55

CONTACT: www.tarmacsportz.co.uk





The Original Groovers

Stunt driver and Tarox founder Gianni Taroni set about revolutionising the braking game as far back as the mid 70s. After developing F1 world championship winning brakes for Keke Rosberg, attentions turned to the road car market. In 83 Tarox manufactured the world's first ever grooved brake disc, which has since been developed into the range of styles that we offer today.

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IT TAKES A 2 TO MAKE THINGS GO RIGHT

We took Mazda's latest release, the all-new Mazda2 supermini, around the demanding roads of Devon to see if it had a chance of beating the tough competition in this sector.

Words and photos: Sam Preston

Mazda UK managing director Jeremy Thompson recently highlighted to us that the Mazda3 was, amazingly, now the oldest model in the current Mazda stable, even though it was only itself released just last year. With sharp new cars being steadily released over 2015 to cater for seemingly every market, it's

clear that Mazda is successfully riding the wave of the UK economy as it once again surges in the right direction.

As excitement for the upcoming MX-5 grows ever stronger, we thought it would be a great time to check out Mazda's most recent offering, the all-new pocket-sized Mazda2, to learn more about the bold, fresh direction the brand has taken in recent times.

Going up against the UK's best-selling car, the Ford Fiesta, means that Mazda has had its work cut out whilst developing the latest Mazda2. Finally free from the reigns of part-Ford ownership means that the competition between the two manufacturers is further increased as both attempt to provide the most frugal, comfortable and tech-packed supermini money can buy...



PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Engine: 1.5-litre SKYACTIV-G petrol, 1.5-litre SKYACTIV-D diesel
Transmission: Five- or six-speed MT, AT option available on 89bhp petrol
Power: 113bhp (petrol), 104bhp (diesel)
0-62mph: 8.7secs (113bhp petrol),

10.1secs (diesel)
Top speed: 124mph (113bhp petrol), 111mph (diesel)
Fuel consumption: 56.5mpg (113bhp petrol), 83.1 (diesel)
Price: From £11,995 (petrol), from £17,395 (diesel)



ENGINE

Both the petrol and the diesel variants of the new Mazda2's available powertrains come in the form of 1.5-litre SKYACTIV units. For the petrol incarnations (choose from 74bhp, 89bhp or 113bhp states of tune), this means a high-compression, normally-aspirated unit; a rather bold and refreshing alternative to the turbocharged engines we're used to seeing on modern cars. This, in turn, yields a claimed economy figure of 56.5mpg (combined) on even the most potent of petrol engines in a package that could prove to be potentially more reliable than its rivals in the long run thanks to its back-to-basics format.

The petrol engine is more than likely to provide the basis for the upcoming MX-5's 129bhp 1.5-litre engine option, providing a linear, fairly uneventful but surprisingly revvy drive with pretty impressive throttle response.

But unsurprisingly it's the 104bhp turbodiesel engine which comes up trumps in the Mazda2. The increased torque and better motorway behaviour will suit the vast majority of owners who are likely to use the car as a small nipper/commuter car. This engine also seems to better complement some of the car's now-standard safety features, like Hill Hold Assist which ensure it's one of the easiest and stress-free cars you could possibly drive.

CHASSIS

We've heard claims that the new MX-5 is up to 100kg lighter than the previous version and weight is clearly an important factor here too, with the car weighing in at just 10kg more than its predecessor even with an 80mm longer wheelbase. The ride gives a surprising amount of confidence even at high speeds, with the only disappointment being a lack of

steering feel during more vigorous cornering, which probably won't be a problem for most people. Both the 15" and 16" diameter wheels provide plenty of tyrewall to make up for the fairly firm suspension. This puts the car in great stead should Mazda decide to release a hotter MPS-style version in the future (here's hoping!).



STYLING/INTERIOR

Mazda's 'KODO – Soul of Motion' design philosophy is claimed to have been a big part of the styling of the 2. Whether you think this is a gimmick or something more, there's no denying that Mazdas are looking pretty smart lately, with clean, clinical lines and LED lighting pushing all the right buttons.

The interior is a pleasant place to be

and is perhaps only bettered by the Audi A1, and even then only just. Gone are the days of shoddy Japanese car interiors by the looks of it! On the top-spec models, expect hand-stitched leather panels, a pleasingly intuitive seven-inch touchscreen and tonnes of space. By deliberately keeping the formula simple inside, we think that Mazda is onto a winner here.



CONCLUSION

With the diesel variant kicking out less than 90g/km of CO₂ (therefore making it exempt from tax), and with prices starting from just £11,995, on paper the Mazda2 is already enough to scare the ageing Fiesta. But taking in the modern styling and getting behind the wheel for yourself is probably enough to have you sold; this all-new supermini is set to offer some additional fierce competition to the already thriving market now that it's available 🚗

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Engine: 2.0-litre SKYACTIV-G petrol, SKYACTIV-D 2.2-litre diesel
Transmission: Six-speed manual, six-speed automatic
Power: 163bhp (petrol), 173bhp (diesel)
0-62mph: 9.1s (petrol), 7.9s (diesel)
Top speed: 134mph (petrol), 134mph (diesel)
Fuel consumption: 47.9mpg (petrol), 58.9mpg (diesel)
Price: From £19,795 (143bhp petrol SE) to £28,795 (173bhp diesel Sport Nav with options)



EXTERIOR

What's new on the outside, then? Mazda's 'KODO' philosophy once again makes an appearance to ensure a futuristic look is achieved. New features up front include a '3D' front bumper design with a metallic 'signature wing' which swoops from one headlight to the other. Not just here for fun, the wing is said to catch and reflect photons from the new adaptive LED headlights at night. Clever stuff!

Speaking of those new headlights, they've got a few tricks up their sleeves too. Sensors can tell when you're following a car at night and adjust the beams to not to blind the driver in front. It's sci-fi stuff like this that really gets us excited.

New 19" wheels are also available, coming as standard in a darker, high-lustre grey colour said to set off the bodywork more effectively. The bodywork can also be had in the new Sonic silver hue to further accentuate the car's coupé-esque lines.

All of these small changes create a truly fresh looking car which genuinely gives it a fighting chance against rivals such as the Ford Mondeo and VW Passat.



ALL THE SMALL THINGS

The Mazda6's mid-life face-lift offers more tech, more safety and more style. But how does this translate on the road?

Words: Sam Preston Photos: Mazda

The current generation of Mazda's celebrated saloon and estate car, the Mazda6, was only introduced in 2013, but this hasn't stopped the company from announcing a comprehensive face-lift this year.

Focusing on something that is very important to most Mazda6 owners – driver comfort and satisfaction – means that most of the tweaks involve the technology crammed into the car's innards along with some subtle-but-effective styling upgrades.

It's only when you put the updated car alongside the already massively impressive 2013 version that you can really start to appreciate the small changes that as a whole create an even more complete and satisfying mid-sized car.



INTERIOR

Mazda's Graeme Fudge tells us that the inside of the Mazda6 is where the team really went to town with the upgrades for the face-lifted model.

On the higher-spec models, your eyes will instantly be drawn to the seven-inch touch-screen and clever head-up display (which really does help you keep your eyes on the road whilst driving), before darting down to the redesigned centre console which shows off Mazda's intuitive and beautifully simple controls and now-standard electric handbrake. Small touches such as moving the volume controls down to the centre console all help to optimise the driving experience. As we all know from long journeys, it's often the finer details which matter the most.

Fudge was keen to address an issue which had caused some criticism in the previous model – road noise – by happily claiming that in the new car it's been reduced by 25%, in turn causing less fatigue and allowing the optional BOSE sound system to be enjoyed more effectively.

TECH

Mazda's Lane Departure Warning system is replaced by the new Lane-keep Assist System with Driver Attention Alert here, offering wheel vibration if the car thinks it has accidentally strayed out of lane. Although undoubtedly very clever, we found this system was often over-sensitive, especially on the motorway.

At the back, the safety systems have also been overhauled. Blind Spot Monitoring with Rear Cross-Traffic Alert not only alerts you to what is immediately behind you, but can also warn you as to what is potentially coming at you from the sides thanks to its wider detection area. Pretty handy for larger cars, this one is sure to be super-effective on the estate models.



CONCLUSION

With the same choice of fantastic SKYACTIV engines as before (2.0-litre petrol and 2.2-litre diesel, both in various states of tune and available with manual or auto 'boxes), the new Mazda6 offers more excitement than we've experienced in other modern saloons. Our pick would still be the automatic diesel, with the 'box doing a great job of wafting the car along on long-distance journeys whilst offering just enough engagement when you want to take more control. Whether it has enough to take your attention away from the German rivals is a matter of taste; but with some tempting buying options and low prices available, we'll be seeing a lot of these on the road in months to come 🌟





SWING AND SWAY

Nissan unveils the Sway, an exciting compact hatchback concept that could hint towards a new design direction for the manufacturer...

Nissan is very proud of its striking Qashqai and Juke. The manufacturer not only thought outside-the-box when developing the unorthodox models, but was also brave enough to see its visions through and release them into a sceptical marketplace. Sales figures prove they were correct to do so as both are proven European successes.

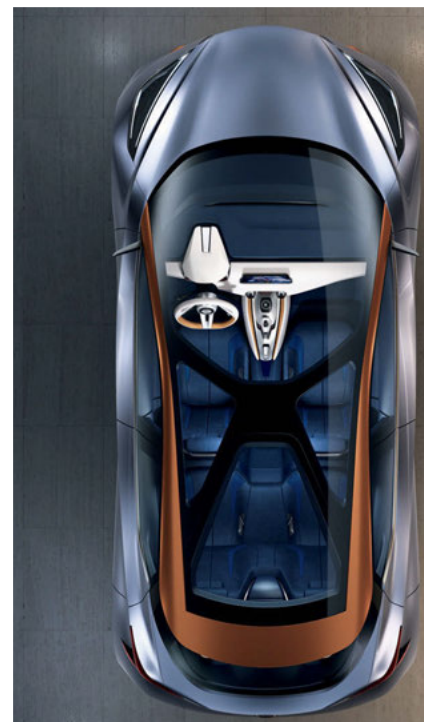
At the Geneva Motor Show in March, Nissan unveiled this, the Sway. It's a compact hatchback that's been sculpted with the manufacturer's 'striking new design language' in mind. Naturally, it's been drawn up to appeal to European tastes and certainly has more desirable flair and funk than most of the affordable hatches in the current Nissan line-up. In fact, the word is that Nissan will adopt the Sway's design cues in other models and market segments soon.

Defining the concept vehicle is the V-motion grille, which sits between twin

V-shaped quarter bumpers. The bonnet striations burst over the front arches before changing direction part way down the front doors and angling straight back to the rear lights. The highlight of the Sway's profile is the floating roofline. A panoramic glass roof helps give the floating impression and opens up the airy cabin. Structural rigidity is retained by the inclusion of a distinctive deformed X-structure in the centre of the roof, while the whole setup looks so unbelievably cool thanks to the contrasting orange accents.

Open the freestyle doors and you're welcomed into an ultra-modern cockpit. Clutter is kept to a minimum with necessities like the sat nav and stereo all operated via a multi-function steering wheel and displayed on a dash-mounted screen.

Nissan is yet to mention any sort of powertrain, indicating the Sway is merely a design exercise, but the fact the company's even contemplating livening up its hatchback offerings can only be a good thing... 🌸



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PROXES R888	ZE914	FK453	ADVAN NEOVA	ADVAN SPORT	195/50/15	195/50/15	£41.88
					205/45/17	205/40/17	£66.88
					225/40/18	225/40/18	£89.92

Exhausts



	Akrapovic	Mongoose	Milltek	Scorpion
HONDA Civic 2.0 Type R (EP3)	-	-	-	£387.02
Civic 2.0 Type R (FN2)	-	-	£619.73	£555.48
Integra 1.8 Type R (DC2)	-	-	-	-
MAZDA RX8 1.3	-	-	-	£526.20
NISSAN 350Z	-	-	£896.51	£396.49
370Z	£1488.20	-	£1142.22	£636.82
CTR	£3720.48	-	£1234.69	£1439.10
MITSUBISHI Lancer Evo 7, 8, 9	-	£382.40	£450.89	£467.71
Lancer Evo 10	£2736.00	£642.30	£743.50	£722.92
SUBARU Impreza (01-07) WRX	-	£451.93	£332.36	£363.12
Impreza (01-07) STi	-	£708.30	£708.30	-
BRZ	-	-	£689.27	-
TOYOTA GT86	-	-	£689.27	-
MR2 Turbo	-	£423.78	-	-

Bushes



Suspension

	Honda Civic Type R FN2	Mitsubishi Evo 10	Nissan Skyline R34	Nissan GTR 35	Subaru Impreza 07-	Toyota GT86
Elbach Lowering Springs	£178.00	£266.40	-	£316.80	£259.20	£259.20
Elbach Suspension Enhancement Kit	-	-	-	-	£413.47	£950.00
KW Coilovers	£964.00	£2199.00	£2369.00	£2731.00	£1008.00	-
Ohlins	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tein Springs	£144.00	£168.00	£180.00	-	£132.00	£156.00
Tein Street Flex	£936.00	£840.00	£732.00	-	-	£840.00
ST Coilovers	£725.00	-	-	-	£725.00	£725.00
Whiteline Anti Roll Bar Front	£177.46	£177.46	£156.79	£325.14	£156.79	£193.54
Whiteline Anti Roll Bar Rear	£214.42	£167.50	£139.58	£177.47	£177.46	£177.46

Air Filters



	K&N Elements	Green Elements
HONDA Civic Type-R (EP3)	£47.99	£48.29
Civic Type-R (FN2)	£44.39	-
MAZDA MX5 1.6 16v	£38.39	£45.97
MX5 1.8	£39.59	£45.97
RX8	£46.79	£70.62
MITSUBISHI Lancer Evo VII/VIII	£65.99	£60.00
Lancer Evo X	£43.19	£73.51
NISSAN 350Z	£49.19	£51.18
370Z	£49.19	-
GTR	£89.99	-
SUBARU Impreza 07-	£40.79	£77.06
TOYOTA GT86	£40.79	£48.28

Harnesses



Hoses



Brake Pads

	Honda Civic Type R FN2	Mitsubishi Evo 10	Nissan Skyline R34	Nissan GTR 35	Subaru Impreza 07-	Toyota GT86
EBC Redstuff Front Pads	£74.32	£110.88	£84.98	£92.91	£68.34	-
EBC Yellow Front Pads	£82.30	£140.36	£91.44	£102.24	£85.52	£70.09
EBC Redstuff Rear Pads	£42.61	£80.13	£59.89	£54.50	£39.27	-
EBC Yellowstuff Rear Pads	£66.94	£92.79	£64.93	£65.34	£48.46	£50.73
Tarox Strada Fast Road Front Pads	£94.80	-	£126.00	£78.00	£70.80	£94.80

Brake Discs

	Honda Civic Type R FN2	Mitsubishi Evo 10	Nissan Skyline R34	Nissan GTR 35	Subaru Impreza 07-	Toyota GT86
Black Diamond XD Front Discs	£189.28	-	-	-	£153.88	£179.41
Black Diamond G12 Front Discs	£176.02	-	-	-	£140.67	£173.70
Black Diamond G6 Front Discs	£158.83	-	-	-	£126.61	£149.60
Black Diamond Combi Front Discs	£184.88	-	-	-	£160.99	£186.49
EBC Front Discs	£210.06	CALL	£226.84	CALL	£220.54	-
EBC Rear Discs	£89.37	CALL	£169.56	CALL	£105.02	-
Tarox Performance Front Discs	£225.25	£636.00	£550.80	-	£225.25	£225.25

Big Brake Conversions

	Honda Civic Type R FN2	Mitsubishi Evo 10	Nissan Skyline R34	Nissan GTR 35	Subaru Impreza 07-	Toyota GT86
AP Racing Kit	£2038.84	£2130.58	£2524.88	CALL	£1996.08	£2156.66
Brembo Gran Turismo Kit	-	-	£1882.40	-	£3182.40	-
Tarox Kit	£1862.40	-	£2350.80	-	-	£3000.00



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HONDA Civic Type R FN2

ABP have developed a full range of tuning parts for the FN2 Civic Type R using our own development car. Testing on the Nurburgring we offer exclusive suspension, brake and performance parts that guarantee to bring your Type R alive! Who said the EP3 was better.....



EXHAUSTS

MILLTEK SPORT ABP exclusive cat-back stainless steel exhaust system.....	£499.00
These exclusive to ABP Milltek systems are quite simply a must have. Superb fit, beautiful quality, amazing soundtrack and good power gains.	
MILLTEK SPORT 3" round tailpipe trims.....(pair)	£125.00
PIPER Stainless Steel Race exhaust manifold & stainless de-cat pipe.....	£630.00
PIPER Stainless Steel Race exhaust manifold & 200CEL Sports Cat.....	£770.00
O2 simulator (removes ECU light with race manifold fitted).....	£70.50
PIPER Stainless steel cat-back exhaust system.....	£520.00
HKS Sport Muffler cat-back exhaust system (3" tailpipes & HKS trims).....	£862.00

FITTING AVAILABLE ON ALL PRODUCTS / UK & WORLDWIDE DELIVERY SERVICE

AIR FILTERS

K&N Sports air filter replacement element (lifetime warranty).....	£41.00
K&N Apollo closed box air filter induction kit.....	£158.00
AEM Short Ram air induction kit (polished or red alloy intake pipe).....	£169.00
POWERTEC Stainless steel air filter kit (including heat shield).....	£149.00
PIPERCROSS Sports air filter kit (including heat shield).....	£145.00
HKS Racing Suction Kit (includes alloy intake pipe).....	£365.00

SUSPENSION

EIBACH ABP Exclusive -30mm lowering spring kit.....	£150.00
These are the very best springs you can buy for the FN2. Offering the ultimate in looks, handling, reduced roll and better ride quality there really are no downsides. Please call for fully fitted prices.	
EIBACH Pro-Kit -15mm lowering spring kit.....	£159.00
All the advantages of our -30mm kits but with less lowering!	
EIBACH Front adjustable camber bolts (essential on lowered cars).....	£25.00
EIBACH Rear camber & toe shims (to get the very best handling).....(each)	£8.50
KW Variant 1 coil-over suspension kit (fully adjustable ride height).....	£879.00
KW Variant 2 coil-over suspension kit (fully adjustable height & rebound).....	£1,069.00
KW Variant 3 coil-over suspension kit (fully adjustable height, bump & rebound).....	£1,379.00
TEIN 5-Tech lowering spring kit (Front -15mm Rear -20mm).....	£228.00
TEIN Superstreet coil over kit with upper mounts (adjustable height & damping).....	£1,080.00
EIBACH 15mm Pro-Spacer kit (improves looks, steering feel & high speed stability).....	£108.00
ABP Stage 1 Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (including camber bolts).....	£135.00
This set up in ABP's workshop improves the FN2 massively. Improving turn in, reducing under-steer and offering greatly improved feel & handling. A MUST HAVE MODIFICATION.	
ABP Stage 2 Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (including bolts & rear shims).....	£224.00
As above but stage 2 also includes removing the rear hubs, fitting correct camber & toe shims (included in price) and setting both front and rear geometry to fast road spec.	

BRAKES

STOPTECH Fast Road Front brake pads.....(set)	£49.00
STOPTECH Front Sport Stop Grooved brake discs.....(pair)	£190.00
STOPTECH Rear Sport Stop Grooved brake discs.....(pair)	£145.00
POWERSLOT Front 350mm Big-disc conversion kit.....	£355.00
Kit uses original caliper and offers superior looks & braking with excellent 350mm discs.	
Kit comes complete with 350mm discs, caliper relocation brackets and fitting kit.	
STOPTECH Touring 300mm 4-POT Brake conversion kit*.....	£995.00
These new budget 300mm kits use a unique directional veined 300mm grooved disc with the ST41 4-pot caliper. Kit comes complete with discs, calipers, pads, hoses and fitting kit. This kit looks great and performs even better!	
STOPTECH BBK 328mm Brake caliper conversion kit*.....	£1,450.00
The legendary Stoptech Big Brake Kit is simply awesome in every way. Using 2-piece 328mm discs and ST40 4-pot calipers the performance on offer from this kit is unreal. Essential for ultra fast road or serious track use. Kit comes complete with 2-piece 328mm discs, alloy bells, calipers, pads, hoses and fitting kit. Choice of Black or Red calipers	
*EIBACH 15mm Pro-Spacer kit (required to fit Stoptech brake kits behind OE Honda wheels).....	£108.00
FERODO DS2500 Front high performance brake pads.....	£99.50
FERODO DS2500 Rear high performance brake pads.....	£92.50
EBC Red Ceramic Front high performance brake pads.....	£87.00
EBC Red Ceramic Rear high performance brake pads.....	£54.00
EBC Turbo Groove drilled & grooved front brake discs.....(pair)	£245.00
TAROX G88 40-Groove high performance front brake discs.....(pair)	£217.00
GOODRIDGE Stainless steel 6-line brake hose kit (including distribution blocks).....	£175.00
MOTUL RBF600 High performance brake fluid (1/2 LT).....	£15.50
FOLIATEC Caliper paint kit (various colours).....	£24.90

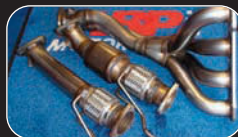
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OTHER ITEMS

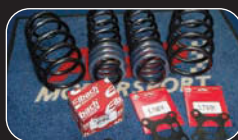
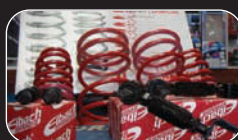
HKS IRIIDIUM spark plugs (set 4).....	£82.00
PIAA Headlight bulb upgrade kits (Set of 6 bulbs - sidelight, dip & main beam).....	from £95.00
YOKOHAMA 225/40X18 PARADA Spec 2 tyre.....	£125.00
YOKOHAMA 225/40X18 ADVAN NEOVA ADO8 tyre (ultimate track day tyre).....	£169.00
YOKOHAMA 225/35X19 Advan Sport OE tyre.....	£215.00

SERVICING FOR FN2 & EP3 TYPE R

ABP offer a full range of servicing to HONDA specification which will not affect the manufacturer's warranty.	
12 month / 12,500 mile service to HONDA spec including all parts & Labour.....	£119.00
24 month / 25,000 mile service to HONDA spec including all parts & Labour.....	£198.40
36 month / 37,500 mile service to HONDA spec including all parts & Labour.....	£154.00
48 month / 50,000 mile service to HONDA spec including all parts & Labour.....	£198.40
60 month / 62,500 mile service to HONDA spec including all parts & Labour.....	£119.00
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All of our services include MOTUL fully synthetic oil, Honda oil & air filters & NGK spark plugs. Cars are serviced to exact HONDA specification and service books are stamped maintaining the warranty. If cars are fitted with performance air filters above prices will be reduced accordingly.	



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ABP purchased an EP3 Type R back in 2001 with the sole aim of developing a full range of tuning parts. We offer exclusive ranges of suspension, brake and performance parts that we believe are the very best available. 10 years on the EP3 is still a great car and more affordable than ever so with a few choice mods the tuning world is your oyster...



EXHAUSTS

PIPER ABP exclusive Single-box cat-back stainless steel exhaust system.....	£349.00
These exclusive to ABP Piper single silencer systems are quite simply a must have. Superb fit, beautiful quality, amazing soundtrack and good power gains. System has a 6x4" oval tailpipe.	
PIPER Twin-box cat-back stainless steel exhaust system As above but with 2 silencers - same power with less sound!.....	£399.00
PIPER Stainless Steel Race exhaust manifold & stainless de-cat pipe.....	£496.00
PIPER Stainless Steel Race exhaust manifold & 200CEL Sports Cat.....	£678.00

****Independent rolling road tests show an incredible increase of +228HP using a PIPER manifold, de-cat and exhaust system on the EP3 Type R!***

DC SPORTS Stainless steel SC3 cat-back exhaust system (4" round tip).....	£430.00
DC SPORTS Stainless steel SHORTY exhaust manifold (uses original cat).....	£375.00
DC SPORTS Stainless steel RACE exhaust manifold (removes catalyst).....	£395.00
All DC Sports items are beautifully crafted in polished stainless steel and offer fantastic looks and power gains. The SC3 system comes with a removable silencing baffle ideal for track days.	
O2 simulator (removes ECU light with race manifold fitted).....	£70.50
HKS Hi Power 409 cat-back exhaust system (120mm angled tailpipe).....	£471.90
Stunning JAP style exhaust system with removable silencing baffle and polished 120mm tailpipe	
SUPERSPRINT Stainless Steel straight through B-pipe.....	£204.00
ENERGY SUSPENSION Up-rated engine mount insert bush kit.....	£26.00

Essential when using any modified exhaust manifold. These also aid traction & prevent wheel hop.

FITTING AVAILABLE ON ALL PRODUCTS / UK & WORLDWIDE DELIVERY SERVICE

AIR FILTERS

K&N Sports air filter replacement element (lifetime warranty).....	£49.00
K&N S71 Air filter kit.....	£109.00
K&N Typhoon air filter induction kit (wrinkle red finish intake pipe).....	£150.00
AEM CAI Cold Air Induction kit (filter relocated behind front bumper) +158HP.....	£245.00
AEM V2 Air Filter Induction kit (Unique dual plenum intake pipe) +188HP.....	£265.00
PIPERCROSS VENOM Sports air filter kit (fully enclosed air box system).....	£175.00

Intake kits make a massive difference to the EP3 Type R offering anything up to +188HP power gains.

Choosing the right combination of exhaust system and filter kit can add up to +25 BHP power improvements!

SUSPENSION

EIBACH ABP Exclusive -30mm lowering spring kit.....	£150.00
These are the very best springs you can buy for the EP3. Offering the ultimate in looks, handling, reduced roll and better ride quality there really are no downsides.	
EIBACH Pro-Kit -15mm lowering spring kit - All the advantages of our -30mm kits but with less lowering!.....	£159.00
EIBACH Front adjustable camber bolts (essential on lowered cars).....	£25.00
EIBACH Rear fully adjustable camber arms (to get the very best handling).....(pair)	£135.00
BILSTEIN B4 Shock absorber kit (front & rear shocks).....(set 4)	£385.00
BILSTEIN B8 Sports up-rated shock absorber kit (front & rear shocks).....(set 4)	£655.00
BILSTEIN are arguably the Worlds best shock absorbers, developed on the Nurburgring they offer fantastic chassis control without the extremes of coil-over set-ups. Simply the best real World suspension solution.	
TEIN 5-Tech lowering spring kit -20mm.....	£228.00
TEIN BASIC coil over suspension kit (adjustable height only).....	£708.00
TEIN Superstreet coil over kit (adjustable height & damping).....	£804.00
TEIN Superstreet coil over kit with upper mounts (adjustable height & damping).....	£1,080.00
EIBACH 15mm Pro-Spacer kit (improves looks, steering feel & high speed stability).....	£108.00
JDM Rear Anti Roll Bar (including bushes).....	£102.50
E-TECH front polished alloy strut brace.....	£87.50
E-TECH front wide-bar lightweight alloy strut brace.....	£170.00
ABP Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (including front camber bolts).....	£155.00

This set up in ABP's workshop improves the EP3 massively. Improving turn in, reducing under-steer and offering greatly improved feel & handling. A MUST HAVE MODIFICATION.

FITTING AVAILABLE ON ALL PRODUCTS / UK & WORLDWIDE DELIVERY SERVICE

BRAKES

STOPTECH Fast Road Front brake pads (set).....	£49.00
STOPTECH Fast Road Rear brake pads (set).....	£38.00
STOPTECH Front Sport Stop Grooved brake discs (pair).....	£190.00
STOPTECH Rear Sport Stop Grooved brake discs (pair).....	£140.00
POWERSLOT Front 350mm Big-disc conversion kit.....	£355.00
Kit uses original caliper and offers superior looks & braking with excellent 350mm discs. Kit comes complete with 350mm discs, caliper relocation brackets and fitting kit.	
STOPTECH Touring 300mm 4-POT Brake conversion kit*.....	£995.00
These new budget 300mm kits use a unique directional veined 300mm grooved disc with the ST41 4-pot caliper. Kit comes complete with discs, calipers, pads, hoses and fitting kit. This kit looks great and performs even better!	
EIBACH 15mm Pro-Spacer kit* (required to fit Touring kit behind OE Honda wheels).....	£108.00
STOPTECH BBK 328mm Brake caliper conversion kit.....	£1,450.00
The legendary Stoptech Big Brake Kit is simply awesome in every way. Using 2-piece 328mm discs and ST40 4-pot calipers the performance on offer from this kit is unreal. Essential for ultra fast road or serious track use. Kit comes complete with 2-piece 328mm discs, alloy bells, calipers, pads, hoses and fitting kit. This kit fits behind the original Honda 17" alloy. Choice of Red or Black calipers.	
FERODO DS2500 Front high performance brake pads.....	£99.50
FERODO DS2500 Rear high performance brake pads.....	£92.50
EBC Red Ceramic Front high performance brake pads.....	£87.00
EBC Red Ceramic Rear high performance brake pads.....	£58.00
EBC Turbo Groove drilled & grooved front brake discs.....(pair)	£245.00
TAROX G88 40-Groove high performance front brake discs.....(pair)	£217.00
GOODRIDGE Stainless steel 4-line brake hose kit (zinc plated unions).....	£62.00
MOTUL RBF600 High performance brake fluid (1/2 LT).....	£15.50
FOLIATEC Caliper paint kit (various colours).....	£24.90

OTHER ITEMS

HKS IRIIDIUM spark plugs (set 4).....	£82.00
NEUSPEED Short Shift gear lever kit.....	£95.00
EXEDY OE 3-piece Clutch kit - Fitting service available.....	£195.00
PIAA Headlight bulb upgrade kits (Set of 4 bulbs - sidelight, dip/main beam).....	from £65.00
PIAA Silicone front wiper blade kit (pair of silicone wiper blades).....	£43.00
YOKOHAMA 215/40X17 PARADA Spec 2 tyre.....	£92.00
YOKOHAMA 215/40x17 ADVAN NEOVA ADO8 tyre (ultimate track day tyre).....	£156.00
ABP recommend changing the original 205/45x17 tyres to the better 215/40x17 size. Wider, slightly lower profile these tyres offer improved handling, grip, feel and they're cheaper!	

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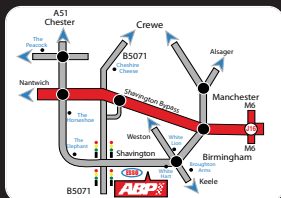
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Sat 9.00am - 3.00pm



ABP are an official UK importer of STOPTECH brakes and offer the full range of high performance brake pads, brake discs and the AWESOME caliper conversion kits. Used extensively in Time Attack series cars these kits are reputed to be the best available. Full range of 4 & 6 pot kits available for most Japanese cars please call for prices to make your car STOP!

STOPTECH high performance brake pads	from £38
EVO 5-9 & Impreza STi FRONT & REAR brake pad set	£118
STOPTECH High performance grooved brake discs	from £140
Mitsubishi EVO 5-9 Front grooved brake discs	£225
Mitsubishi EVO 5-9 Rear grooved brake discs	£195
Honda Civic Type R FRONT & REAR grooved brake disc kit	£330
STOPTECH Big Brake Caliper conversion kits	from £995
Honda Civic Type R EP3 & FN2 Tuning kit (300mm)	£995
Honda Civic Type R EP3 & FN2 (4-pot 328mm)	£1,450
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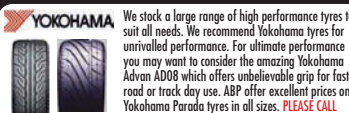
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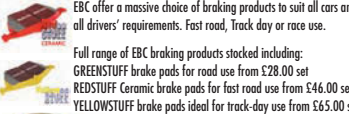
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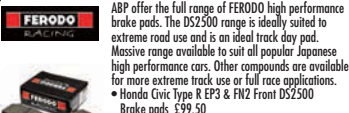


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ABP's workshop carries Cheshire County Council Trading Standards approval assuring you of the highest quality and 1st class customer service. ABP achieved Trading Standards first perfect 100% mystery shop result in August 2010.

ABP were awarded CAT magazines coveted title of National Garage of the Year in both 2010 and 2011. An award we all take very seriously and testament to our very high standards.

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- Fully Skilled & Experienced Staff
- Trading Standards Approved
- National CAT Garage of the Year 2010 & 2011



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We offer a full servicing & Maintenance service to our customers. ABP Service all cars to manufacturer specification therefore maintaining warranties & correct service history!

The advantages our service gives you over & above the dealers (or stealers!) are:

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Full range of servicing / maintenance available including timing belts, clutches, brakes, suspension & steering work.

Please phone with your exact requirements and we will be happy to advise and give competitive prices.

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- Vague Steering?
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ABP can also offer unique FAST ROAD settings for many cars offering improved handling and turn in by introducing more extreme alignment practices. We can also set your geometry up to your own individual spec for track use or drifting etc.

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Subaru Impreza Turbo / STi / WRX & Mitsubishi EVO 5-10	£135.00
Check and reset front & rear Wheel Alignment & Camber angles to Fast Road spec	
HONDA S2000 Check and reset front & rear Wheel Alignment; Camber and Castor angles to Fast Road or Honda spec	£140.00
Honda Civic Type R EP3 ABP Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (Including front camber bolts)	£155.00
This set up includes supplying & fitting adjustable front camber bolts, reset the front & rear Wheel Alignment & Camber angles to ABP Fast Road spec. These improve the EP3 massively. Improving turn in, reducing under-steer and offering greatly improved feel & handling and reduced tyre wear!	
Honda Civic Type R FN2 ABP Stage 1 Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (Including camber bolts)	£135.00
This set up includes supplying & fitting adjustable front camber bolts, reset the front Wheel Alignment & Camber angles to ABP Fast Road spec. These improve the FN2 massively. Improving turn in, reducing under-steer and offering greatly improved feel & handling.	
Honda Civic Type R FN2 ABP Stage 2 Fast Road suspension geometry set-up (Including bolts & rear shim kit)	£224.00
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Fully adjustable coil-over suspension kits supplied & fitted

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Brake discs & pads fitting	from £82.50	Clutch kits fitting	from £165.00
Big Brake conversion kits fitting	from £110.00	Pre / Post Track day check-over	from £55.00
Suspension kit fitting	from £165.00		

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

SCANDINAVIAN SITUATION

I was reading a recent issue of *Banzai* and saw features writer Sam was considering buying a DC2 Honda Integra. I therefore figured that he might have a decent idea of the availability of a good DC2 Type R in Europe.

I'm a guy from Sweden who's been driving a DC2 Type R for three years and last summer it got driven into by a SUV so the car sadly got totalled. My insurance company unfortunately wouldn't recognise this car's status and price. So half a year later they finally came up with a price which was based on the scrappy looking ones they found online, mostly because these seem to be the only ones that stay up for sale for longer period of times. I was therefore wondering if you had a good idea of where I could get a DC2 Type R that is in a great shape and running well mechanically?

Emanuel Ferm, via email

Sorry to hear the sad story of your DC2, Emanuel. It's a real shame; your insurance company doesn't sound like it's much of a fan of JDM cars.

We're not experts in Swedish car importers I'm afraid, and a quick online search reveals that these seem to be rather thin on the ground, which is perhaps the root of your problem. We have been in touch with Scottish-based Rare Imports (www.rareimports.co.uk), however, who almost always seems to have a handful of immaculate and reasonably priced DC2 Integras in stock.

These guys tell us they are used to shipping their stock over to Scandinavia as they've done it on more than one occasion in the past, so try dropping Zak an email at info@rareimports.co.uk and see if they can help.



STAR OF THE SMALL SCREEN

We'd like to give a big thank you to Tom Cottam for letting us use his fantastic video of the recent VTEC Challenge Dial-in Day in the digital version of the April issue. Tom's talent behind the lens is second-to-none, so do hit him up if you fancy a nice video of a show or meet whipped up for you! His website is www.tomcottam.com and his Facebook fan page is www.facebook.com/tomcottamfilms.

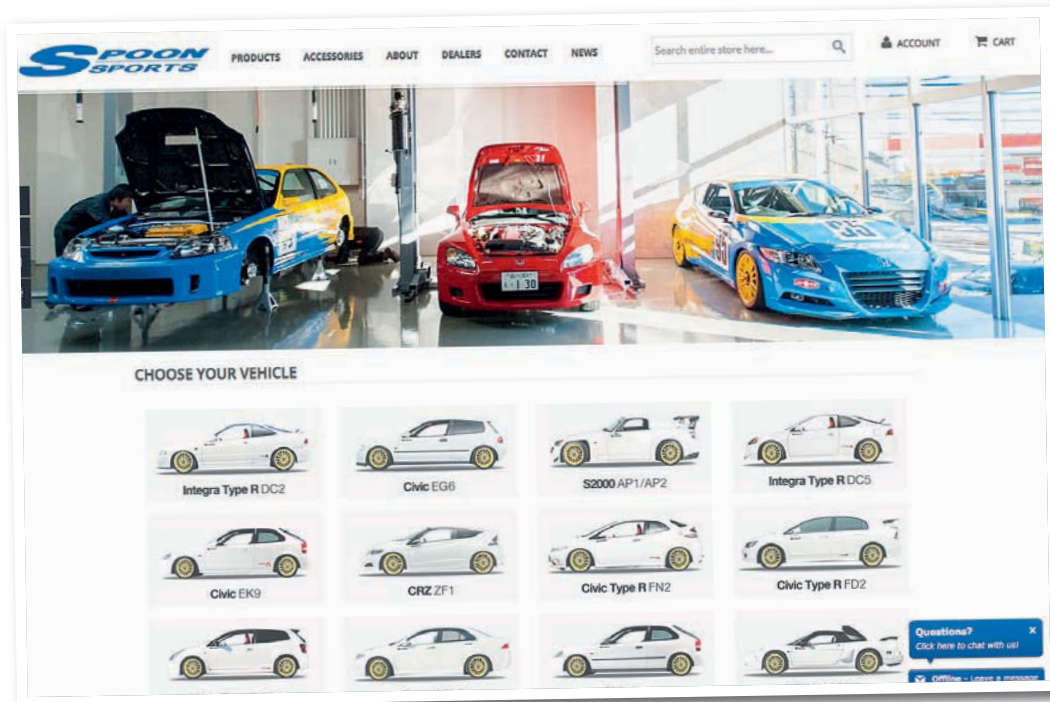
If you didn't know already, the digital version of *Banzai* magazine is full of great videos and other interactive goodies to increase your enjoyment of each feature. Why not go and download an issue and check it out for yourself?

MIRROR IMAGE

Hi guys, just to let you know I'm a massive fan and have every issue of *Banzai* since issue #1! I'm from Portugal and recently spotted an EK-shaped Honda Civic at a local show, which had some carbon fibre Spoon side mirrors on it. Just wondering if you would know where I can get some of these for my car?

Bruno Vaz, via Facebook

Hi Bruno, thanks for getting in touch. You're in luck with the Spoon Sports mirrors you're after, as Spoon Sports EU has a thriving shop with the exact mirrors you're after! Check out its brand-new website www.spoonsports.eu to see what parts take your fancy. Also, look for a full profile on Spoon Sports EU in an forthcoming issue!



CONTACT US

Do you want to comment on what you like in *Banzai*? Have you got a suggestion that you think would make each issue even better? Do you need our help with technical queries or advice, or do you just want to share something cool with the community at large?

Then please feel free to contact us using one of the following methods:

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Q: How much harder are Powerflex Black Series race bushes than standard rubber items?
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Once you've found the answer, send it over to banzai@unity-media.com along with the type of car you own, with 'Powerflex Competition' as the subject line.

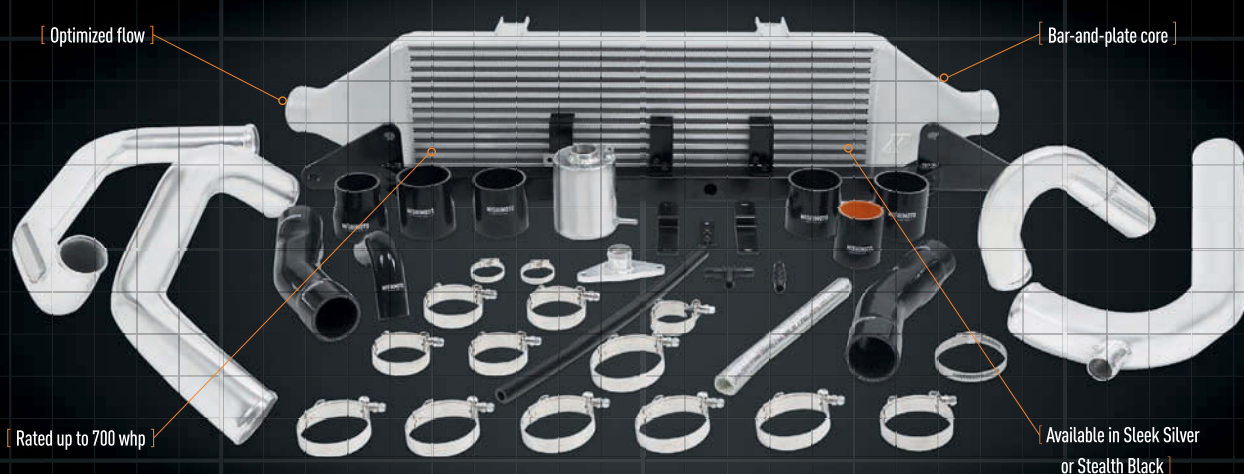
Terms & Conditions: Images are for reference only. All entries must be in by 21 May 2015. This competition is only open to UK residents, 18 years of age and older. Employees of Powerflex, Unity Media and associated companies are ineligible to enter. The winner will be picked at random by us and our decision is final. We reserve the right to disqualify any entrant and/or winner with absolute discretion for any reason and without notice in accordance with the competition rules. One entry per person and there will be one winner who will be contacted by us directly. No further correspondence will be entered into once the winner has been announced.

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Spotlight:

HONDA CHIEF ENGINEER HISAYUKI YAGI

Hisayuki Yagi is Honda's chief engineer and the man who's made all of the big decisions throughout the development of the new Civic Type R. Editor, Andy Basoo, travelled to meet him at the Geneva Motor Show...



It's not often you get invited to meet a manufacturer's chief engineer, so this was an opportunity I was hardly going to pass up. If I'm honest, I didn't really know what to expect. In my experience, the more important the individual, the less personal the interview becomes. I therefore tailored my prepared questions with quite a formal feel to them. Little did I know the tone of the encounter would quickly change and I'd end up scrapping most of what I had written down.

The interview would be conducted through a Japanese translator, with Honda representatives from Japan and the UK also present, along with a member of the Honda PR team and a fellow journalist from Top Gear. No pressure then. As I entered the meeting room (away from the hustle and bustle of the Geneva Motor Show), I was handed a copy of Hisayuki-san's impressive CV, greetings were exchanged and the interview commenced...

AB: What is your favourite aspect of the new Type R?

HY: It has a dynamic performance. My private car is an S2000, but the Civic Type R makes you want to drive a FWD car, and that's something that as an S2000 driver happens very, very rarely.

AB: Apart from the new Civic Type R, what has been your favourite Type R and why?

HY: It's a very difficult question. It's like asking someone who has three children which one they love most. I have been involved in the development of the 2001 Type R, the 2008 Type R and now the 2015.5/2016 Type R. So, each Type R I've been involved with, at that time is the best Type R. So, I can't say which is my favourite. I can't choose my best child... but, I have a favourite child, which of course at the moment is the latest Type R! So, if you compare that to children, the 2001 and 2008 Type Rs have already left home and now it's the youngest child I love most!

AB: What are the key areas where the new car improves over the 2008 Type R?

HY: I had the chance to drive a 2008 Civic Type R made by one of the famous tuning



companies in Japan. That was the point that opened my eyes that engine performance is very important. Even though the 2008 Type R had sufficient engine performance, I felt such a big difference in the complete dynamic behaviour of the vehicle. It struck me strongly that engine performance needed to be tuned or increased for the next Type R.

When compared directly to the other hot hatches using turbocharged engines, the 201hp in the 2008 Civic Type R of course felt a bit weak. However, from the aspect of being fun to drive, it was really balanced. It still had potential, room for improvement, and customers applied aftermarket parts and tuning companies worked on the car. And seeing these tuned vehicles competing at the top level gave me confidence that even that car had potential for improvement.

AB: What tuning house car did you drive?

HY: We can't say the name [of the tuning house], but Honda has a lot of tuning companies that we are related to.

At this point in the interview, I was asked again what publication I worked for, I guess because I seemed so interested in the tuning side of things. My questions probably stood

out from the usual, down-the-line questions he'd been asked by most of the motoring media. Hisayuki-san asked if I had an issue of Banzai on me he could look at. Naturally, I'd arrived prepared so pulled out a couple of copies, and as he began flicking through, he kept stopping and saying, "I used to own one of those". He seemed particularly interested in the retro models, commenting on various CRXs and AE86s when he spotted them. There was a clear change Hisayuki-san's body language. He was relaxed and our remaining time transitioned into more of an informal chat than an official interview...

AB: Is the Nürburgring car a different specification to the production vehicle and if so, will a Nürburgring edition be available?

HY: The vehicle is slightly different. It was a development car as the lap time was set in May 2014. At that time we didn't have the production car ready yet. We applied a roll-cage to maintain safety for our test driver. We didn't want to risk any life just for the sake of a good lap time. Still, the roll-cage was mounted on bushes, so it did not have any influence on body rigidity. We were curious and wanted to know what the potential [of the new Type R] was, so it didn't make sense to

make it more rigid and different to a mass-production car. You wouldn't know where you were at the end. It was important to maintain the same stock conditions. The weight increase of the roll-cage was then compensated by removing lots of parts like the rear seats or the airbag compressor. So, basically the rest is technically identical to the production car that you can buy off-the-shelf, from suspension to tyres to engine specification. You should be able to reproduce that exact time in a production vehicle.

AB: Could the Civic go down the same route as Renault and a stripped-out, two-seater version made available?

HY: At the moment there is no plan to go in that direction. However, there is still a lot of room for improvement so if you were to apply those measures yourself, the car will become even faster. It's a full, usable car with fold-down seats. So, you can take four sports tyres in the back with some tools, your gloves and a helmet and you can drive to a track day without asking a friend to carry all your stuff. So you can keep that in your mind, while convincing your wife about the practicality of the car. That's the hidden versatility [of the new Type R]!



“I love driving and I love cars. I also like the driving feel that comes from turbocharged engines”

AB: Is the 2.0-litre engine based on the K-series or is it completely new?

HY: It's completely new.

AB: How have you managed to maintain the same feel of a high-revving VTEC engine?

HY: This is very difficult to describe. The red zone is at 7000rpm but it actually feels like the engine is revving up to 8000rpm. But you need to drive it to fully understand and confirm that. What do you think about turbocharged cars?

AB: What do I think? Even as a Honda fan you can see why most other manufacturers have gone turbocharged because the power is easier to achieve and obviously there's emissions to consider too. From our point of view, tuning is easier as well. But unless you drive a Type R, you'll never know and understand how it feels. So for me, a naturally aspirated Type R is just as fun as a big power turbo car. It may not be as fast, but it's just as fun. So, what I'm really hoping for from the new Type R is that you still get the same sense of fun, that it's still exhilarating. There are a lot of fast, turbocharged cars on the market that aren't fun to drive and don't make you feel like you're in control and actually driving the car.

HY: I love driving and I love cars. I also like the driving feel that comes from turbocharged engines. What I'd like to confirm is, are you as enthusiastic as I am about driving cars?

AB: Absolutely!

HY: So what I'd like to emphasise is that the Civic Type R engine is not a turbo engine with VTEC. It's a VTEC engine with a turbo. There's a difference.

AB: I understand what you mean. One final question, our readers would like to know if there will be a new RWD S2000 or something similar?

HY: If I weren't a Honda employee, of course I'd love Honda to develop one. Do you think that [a new S2000] should be naturally aspirated as well or can it be turbo'd?

AB: That's an interesting question. The S2000 is unique in how it drives. I'm not sure you could replicate the feel of that high-revving sensation with a turbo. But as you said, there's still a lot of fun to be had in turbocharged vehicles. I think the market would demand it was turbocharged. Here in the UK, the Toyota GT86 hasn't been a big success. People look at the performance of other cars, even hot hatches that are much faster and view the GT86 as not being quick enough. That's the reason most supercharge or turbo their cars. They want more power.

HY: So we'll have to prepare a lot of engine variations then! To be honest, when I was young I was driving an AE86. So, I can fully understand that such cars [naturally aspirated RWD models like the S2000 and GT86] are really fun. I understand the quality and performance of such cars. I was still a student when I bought it. It was a car even a student could afford. That's the kind of car I would still love to have available today.

AB: Well, thank you so much for your time. It was an absolute pleasure to meet you.

HY: Thank you.

After concluding formalities, I leave the meeting room thoroughly impressed. What an interesting man! I arrived at the scheduled interview expecting to be faced with a very corporate, tight-lipped individual, but instead I left feeling like I had been chatting to a mate for the last 20 minutes about our mutual passion for cars.

Hisayuki-san is someone who completely understands the aftermarket tuning scene and I think that is reflected in the models he's overseen production of. He even let on that the reason why the new Type R is turbocharged is because of a tuner-built example he drove. He said driving it opened his eyes and seeing how enthusiasts and specialist companies alike have successfully reworked their own examples gave him confidence that a force-induced Civic platform would really work. How often do you hear huge car manufacturers actually listening to the aftermarket sector and drawing inspiration from the cars that we build? This is certainly a first for us!

You also get the impression he has left the new Type R with plenty of room to grow. He implied the Civic can become a much more focused track weapon when tweaked in the right way. And his comment about it housing a 'VTEC engine with a turbo' and not a 'turbo engine with VTEC' has filled me with confidence the new Type R is going to be more exhilarating to pilot than ever. Watch this space...



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Accord Type-R CH1 1998-2003, with Cat Replacement	£ 749.19	Full System with Cat Replacement	£ 658.38	Full System with Sports Cat	£1,117.12
Accord Type-R CH1 1998-2003, Full System without Cat Replacement	£ 681.08	Lancer Evo 4/5/6		Lancer Evo X	
Accord Type-R CH1 1998-2003, Full System without Downpipe	£ 643.25	Full System without Cat Replacement	£ 605.40	Full System with Cat Replacement	£ 857.66
Accord Type-R CH1 1998-2003, Full System without Downpipe	£ 643.25	Lancer Evo 4/5/6		Lancer Evo X Cat Back	£ 699.10
Accord Type-R CH1 1998-2003, Cat back	£ 552.44	Full System without Downpipe	£ 514.59	NISSAN	
Civic Sport EP2 2001-2005, Cat Back	£ 446.49	Lancer Evo 4/5/6 Cat Back	£ 454.05	300ZX (Does not fit SWB cars), Cat Back	£ 718.92
		Lancer Evo 7/8/9		350Z, Cat Back and Cat Replacements	£1,051.90
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INSIDE MAN

In his latest column, 6TWO1 front man Adam Ivell recalls the fascinating start of his recent voyage to Japan...



This month I have a story about true Japanese car culture. I have always dreamt of visiting Japan. Not just since I was 17 and got my driving licence; I'm going further back to when I was a kid, visiting the local Honda garage with my dad to see his friend who so happened to be the dealer principle. This meant I got given the brochures of the new models early and got to sit in and mess around with all the latest Hondas without any real supervision. Obviously as a five-year-old I wasn't out driving them but I remember it as clear as day. I remember sitting in EG Civics, EK Civics and even seeing a Civic Jordan and thinking it was the coolest thing I'd ever seen. The day I saw my first NSX in the flesh was also one I'll never forget. Being given all these experiences as a child just got me hooked.

I had my first real 'oh my God I need VTEC' experience at 15. I got taken out in an S2000 with the roof down and realised that I needed this in my life. Once the internet became a thing and I wasn't stuck just looking at my Japanese car book collection I instantly took to the web to find the latest and greatest things to come out of Japan. I also stumbled on some things that have possibly scarred me for life... but that's another story.

Finally, I was in the position financially, mentally and physically where I could take on a trip to Japan before any of the large financial drains I've seen many of my friends go through, such as marriage and buying a house, took hold. I knew before I got to this point I needed to do the Japan trip and it was something I had to do on my own.

With the flights and hotels booked, next I had to search for my rental car. I was going to just use one of the global brands like Hertz, as that's who I normally go with, but this time around I dug deeper. I've recently purchased a DC5 Integra for 6TWO1 to be a new demo car, so I can showcase the suspension I've developed and also to take people on test runs from the shop. That's why I knew I needed to get a DC5 for my trip out there. It just had to happen. I searched endlessly, going on all these very bizarre websites which I

could not understand before finally, I found it.

I discovered a company that would rent me a DC5. The only problem was the time limit. You had to book two months in advance but the trip was only five weeks away. I emailed them and their reply was that, thankfully, they had one available on that date. It clearly was meant to be!

As soon as I landed, I headed to my hotel (which was amazing! I couldn't believe the deal I got), had a two-hour nap then decided I had to head out and find a car meet. It was a Saturday night and I'd seen online the legendary Daikoku-futo parking area seemed like a popular spot but I didn't know what to expect. I wrestled with the sat nav and made my way there.

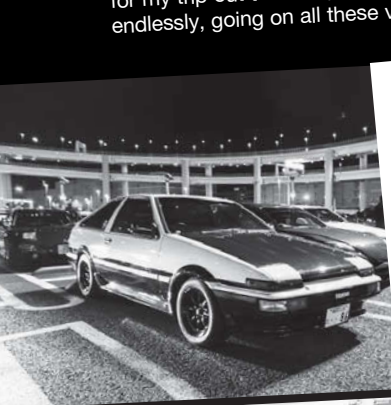
Upon arrival, I pulled down the long slip road that approaches the service station. After turning the corner, I gasped. Every single space was full with modified cars. More were lining up to get in, every single one of them epic in its own way. I got out and wandered around, not talking to anyone as the language barrier was a worry for me and also the fact that I was on my own made me wary... but everyone was really friendly.

I loved the variety of cars that were there: RWB-kitted Porches; panda-coloured Truenos; track-ready CR-Xs; and even some bosozoku cars. So cool! I didn't stay too long, just long enough to feel the vibe and get some photos, but it was awesome! If you're ever in Tokyo, just find out where this place is and get down there. You will require transport to get in as you cannot access it without a car or bike; maybe a taxi can drop you there if needed but it really is a super-cool place!

Now, this was only day one of my trip, and I want to break up the whole story over the next few months to give full justice to just how epic the whole thing was. I saw some crazy things and got into all sorts of mischief as it unfolded. Needless to say, it blew mind! 🍷

Contacts

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A DC5 as a hire car?
Adam certainly did his trip to Japan in style...



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| **FD3S Mazda RX-7** |

ACTING ON IMPULSE

Some people have been disappointed after buying their dream car, but we meet a man who is living an enhanced reality after taking the plunge with an FD3S Mazda RX-7.

Words: Joe Clifford Photos: Chris Wallbank







Curves have a way of pressing buttons in a man's brain. Whether it's the hourglass figure of a pin-up or a ribbon of Tarmac winding its way through a mountain valley, the sight of organic curves usually ignites an electrical storm through a man's synapses. It either takes a huge amount of self-control to resist the urges, or you can decide to take a metaphorical umbrella into the storm and plan to get zapped.

In the eyes of Maltese enthusiast Kenneth Bonello, the FD3-chassis Mazda RX-7 was like that perfect pin-up – a curvaceous and alluring beauty that appeared unattainable to a mere mortal like him. Although the urge to own one was strong, he was also swayed by rumours of the model's high-maintenance behaviour and temperamental conduct. So when Kenneth received his driving licence at the age of 18 he avoided the glamorous Hiroshima hero and settled for a succession of Hondas, which, in all fairness, taught him the ways of the tuning world and provided the perfect springboard for the high-rev lunacy of that eccentric rotary engine design.

There are so many JDM imports in Malta that the Mediterranean island could almost be an extension of Japan's archipelago. It was therefore inevitable that Kenneth would be introduced to an FD at some point in his driving career. But the time came sooner than expected; in fact, part-way through negotiating the purchase of a DC2 Integra Type-R to replace his trusty Del Sol. Kenneth had noticed a silver, freshly imported third-

generation RX-7 in the dealership looking at him with come-hither eyes, and he was powerless to resist.

Most people would say that it is not a good thing to get behind the wheel of your dream car as it rarely meets expectations. But Kenneth's test-drive of the FD confirmed every positive comment he'd ever read about the model – he was simply blown away. The Integra was forgotten and the two lovers eloped straight away.

"As time passed, I started to gather as much information as possible about the rotary engine and the car itself," Kenneth revealed. "I soon realised what an amazing piece of engineering the motor was and what great potential the car had. Suggestions from RX7Club.com helped me improve its reliability with modifications such as uprated intercooler and radiator components, but eventually it became necessary to overhaul the engine."

With seals refreshed, Kenneth decided to celebrate the car's newfound health by stretching its legs beyond the confines of his island. So he took a 90-minute ferry ride to Pozzallo, Sicily, for a track day another two-and-a-half hours inland at Autodromo di Pergusa. Although quite a mission for a thrill ride, from the moment he inched on to the circuit he became hooked on racing, which, in turn, began an expensive but fulfilling addiction to track modifications. However, by bothering to source and import most of his own parts from Japan, the US and UK, not to mention support from his sponsors, Kenneth has managed to keep a lid on these costs.

He continued: "Soon after that track day I





converted the sequential twin-turbos to a non-sequential setup, changed the primary injectors to 850s for more juice and changed the OEM suspension to Apexi T-Max shocks. But it didn't take long for me to realise that if I really wanted to compete in more serious competitions I had to take the next step."

For Kenneth, the next step up the motorsport ladder was to compete in Time Attack. A study of the regulations allowed Kenneth to create a shopping list of parts and modifications that he felt were needed to be competitive within the Pro category.

The modifying process began once again with the rotary's internals, this time each rotor housing being machined with a bridge port to add intake duration to significantly increase the rev-range and top-end power. This no-going-back process ruins the engine's low-speed performance (some of this has been restored with an RE-Amemiya 4.777 final drive set), kills what little fuel economy the

rotary can muster, and makes the idle as lumpy as a bag of potatoes. But the rewards come in performance and an exhaust scream that's as raunchy as that of Mazda's famous 787B Le Mans winner.

With no need to worry about low-end flexibility any more, the small twin-turbo setup was replaced with a hungry GReddy TD07-25G single turbo more suitable for pressurising a quantum leap in airflow. Hosting the blower is a GReddy exhaust manifold and downpipe, which was then connected to an Apexi N1 exhaust system via a 90mm diameter mid-pipe. At the opposite end, the compressed atmosphere is sent through the compatible GReddy front-mounted intercooler fitted previously, before being introduced into the engine through ported intake manifolds.

An increase in airflow means a requisite increase in fuel in order to maintain the correct ratio within the combustion chamber.

This is where things become especially painful for RX-7 owners, because injectors the size of a fireman's hose are needed to satiate the rotary's thirst for high-octane race fuel. So in addition to the 850cc primary injectors already fitted, Kenneth installed a secondary fuel rail equipped with a pair of Bosch 1700cc injectors. These are fed by a Bosch 044 pump sucking on a system that's kept pressurised at the optimum expense level irrespective of engine load. This package, put together by the experts at Zoqdi Racing in Malta, goes a long way towards redeeming the ongoing expenditure with a thumping 515bhp output on low boost.

Power is nothing without control, they say. So the modifications had to continue as the Mazda's chassis was brought back up to speed. Though rare, the adjustable shocks Kenneth had already purchased were too road-biased for serious track use, so they were removed and the entire struts replaced

Although its rotary roots remain the same, the heavily tuned 13B is now good for over 500bhp



Engine: 13B-REW 2x654cc rotary, lightened rotors, RA Super Seals, bridge port machining, ported upper and lower inlet manifolds, 850cc primary injectors, 1700cc Bosch secondary injectors, custom fuel rails, Sard fuel pressure regulator, braided fuel hoses, Bosch 044 external fuel pump, Aeromotive fuel filter, custom surge tank, GReddy TD07-25G turbo, GReddy front-mount intercooler, GReddy exhaust manifold and downpipe, HKS external wastegate and screamer pipe, Blitz air filter, boost controller, HKS ignition amplifier, MSD ignition leads, 90mm custom mid-pipe, Apexi N1 cat-back exhaust system, HKS blow-off valve, custom reservoir tanks, Fluidyne racing radiator, Sard thermostat, Samco coolant hoses, Hel braided clutch line, Banzai Racing oil pan brace, solid engine mounts, Odyssey battery with cut-out switch, air conditioning removed

Transmission: OEM five-speed gearbox, RE-Amemiya short-shift mechanism, ACT clutch, Banzai Racing transmission brace, RE-Amemiya 4.777 final gear set, Kaaz 1.5-way LSD, Banzai Racing differential brace, solid differential mounts

Chassis: 18" Lenso Project D five-spoke alloys with Dunlop Sport Maxx GT tyres (road spec), Ohlins DFV coilovers with Swift springs, Powerflex Black Series suspension bushes, Autoexe two-piece front brake discs, OEM calipers with Ferodo DC3000 pads, Do-Luck braided hoses

Exterior: RE-Amemiya N1 front bumper with canards, RE-Amemiya headlights, Ganador mirrors, '99-spec rear lenses, RE-Amemiya GT wing, RE-Amemiya rear diffuser

Interior: Corbeau reclining seats, OMP Superquadro steering wheel, Feed dials, Grex gear knob, carbon fibre dash kit, water/boost gauges in A-pillar pod, Apexi Power FC with Commander, Blitz turbo timer, Demon Tweaks lap timer

Contacts/thanks: Thank you to my sponsors Odds & More, CBM and Virtu Ferries for making this possible, and my wife and brother-in-law for their help and support





“I soon realised what an amazing piece of engineering the motor was”

with a set of high-end Ohlins DFV coilovers equipped with a carefully chosen set of Swift springs. All connections within the suspension system were tightened up to race-spec with Powerflex Black Series polyurethane bushes, while key elements of the driveline such as the rebuilt transmission and Kaaz 1.5-way limited-slip differential were given additional support with Banzai Racing braces.

Final layers of control are supplied by the front brakes – a relatively straightforward upgrade based around an Autoexe floating disc arrangement and OEM calipers equipped with heavy-duty Ferodo pads – and a set of lightweight 18” alloy wheels with an easy-to-clean five-spoke design.

We’re glad that Kenneth has refrained from making too many changes to the overall shape and design of his FD. However, just as

ladies frequently employ strategic body enhancements to their benefit, this RX-7 also benefits from a couple of well-chosen components from the famous rotary specialists at RE-Amemiya. Cherry picked from the catalogue is an N1 front bumper with air-chiselling canards on the corners, new headlights that incorporate ram air ducts, and a GT wing and rear diffuser to salvage extra downforce from the air before it slips past.

Inside, things have been kept relatively simple and close to factory standard, emphasising that the car remains road legal despite the blatant track bias of its exterior. In fact, the only items not there anymore are the air conditioning system and spare wheel. Touch points include a pair of Corbeau recliners, a flat-bottomed OMP steering wheel and a Grex gear knob. But Kenneth has

included plenty more essential things to keep an eye on while competing, from the Feed dials in the instrument cluster and a duo of gauges in the A-pillar to the lap timer and Apexi Power FC Commander module.

So how has Kenneth got on in Time Attack? He said: “In the last Time Attack that I competed in, which was last November, I qualified second in the Pro category, just three milliseconds behind the mighty [first-placed competitor]. I am now planning to take part in Italy’s Time Attack series and, if I’m lucky enough, one day I also hope to take part in one of the UK Time Attack events.”

Having braved the electrical storm in his head to make his first dream come true, we have no doubt that Kenneth will do all he can to make his next round of fantasies a reality as well 🍀



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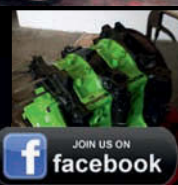


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FAST AND LOUD

Santa Pod's Fast Show was one of the first proper events of the year, with plenty of sun and incredible cars reminding us what we've missed out on over the seemingly endless winter months.

Words: Sam Preston
Photos: Dave Powney,
Sam Preston and
Dave 'DJ' Jones

Didn't winter seem to go on for an eternity this year? Thankfully, the nights are officially getting shorter as the sun appears to have come out of hibernation once again, with Santa Pod drag strip celebrating this fact back in March with the season-opening Fast Show.

Walking around the multi-brand show in a T-shirt, complete with the obligatory Mr Whippy in hand, successfully reignited our excitement for this year's upcoming show season, with cars from almost every corner of the car tuning sphere in attendance.

The clubs area was filled to the brim, with plenty of Japanese cars making up the numbers thanks to clubs such as the Subaru Impreza Owners' Club and the previously featured Static Clique gang who had a couple of new stanced-out cars to show us.

On the quarter-mile strip, the run what ya bring format ran throughout the day, allowing an endless supply of punters the chance to test their car's performance in front of a huge crowd. Our favourites included Jeff Whitbrook's boosted VTEC-powered Daihatsu





It's amazing the difference a bit of sun makes don't you think?



Static Clique's range of top-spec cars never fails to disappoint



Charade (featured in the October 2014 issue of *Banzai*) and one of Severnvalley Motorsport's many infamous single-figure drag GT-Rs, both of which unsurprisingly ate up their competition.

The road-going cars made way for the pros in the afternoon in the form of the first rounds of both the FWD and Jap Drag series. There were a whopping 18 entrants in the FWD championship opener, including two eight-second cars in the form of Richard Batty and his Mitsubishi FTO and Guy Chamberlain's mental EP3 Civic Type R. It was also nice to see Amy Bradley and her EG Civic from the March 2015 issue of *Banzai* making an appearance in this league. In terms of the Jap Drag series, it was once again Jeff Ludgate's Abbey Motorsport-prepared R33 Skyline which stole the show, managing a best run of 8.80secs at 165mph – just a tenth of a second off the car's record!

Away from the strip, there was lots of fun to be had, such as Dyno Dynamics' portable dyno giving drivers the chance to see how many horses their car had gained (or lost!) over the course of its life. The Live Action Arena was also busy with drift taxi rides and stunt shows being thrown into the mix.

With a chilled-out and enjoyable atmosphere felt in every corner of Santa Pod's vast grounds, we're hopeful that this year's wide range of shows are going to be some of the best yet. We'll no doubt bump into some of you along the way! 🌟



Steve Bowen's Evo VIII has been well-known to run single-figure times





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THOROUGH EXAMINATION: **SUBARU WRX STI**

In what has to be the most comprehensive review of the latest WRX STI yet, we test the Subaru on the road, on track and even on the dyno to see just how good it is and what tuning potential it possesses...

Words: Andy Basoo **Photos:** Stephen Hall



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ON THE ROAD

The WRX STI is back; not just in terms of being back on sale but the model is back in all its booted, big-winged glory. There are no holds barred, no airs and graces, and zero effort has been taken to conform to European tastes; we can't help but love the new Subaru for that. The initial impression is that the new car is significantly larger than the old one but at 4595mm it's just 15mm longer than the old saloon (4580mm) and 180mm longer than the hatch (4415mm). The wheelbase is 25mm longer, though, which provides added stability.

Step inside and we were impressed straight away: the new WRX STI is a real step up in terms of comfort and quality over the hatch. Carbon fibre-look trim, red-detailed Alcantara and leather seats, and a glowing pink STI badge are all welcome additions to the cabin. There are even a few trick features like Bluetooth and USB connectivity, hill start and Pioneer satellite navigation. Interestingly, under the 'Entertainment' section of Subaru's official press pack the manufacturer lists 'four-cylinder boxer engine burble'. Yes, the burble is back, albeit with softer tones. A fruitier exhaust will be probably be the first addition for buyers. Under normal driving conditions we

really appreciated the refinement of this boxer arrangement, though. It's not aggressive or brash unless you want it to be. It's very easy to fly under the radar and achieve almost 30mpg if you're sensible with the right pedal.

The ride is much improved, too. The new model feels more planted and stable. The steering has more weight behind it, giving you greater feel in the process. It provides you with increased confidence with your inputs. That said, it is still a little on the light side for our liking. We would have liked to see a notable reduction in power assistance when 'Sport Sharp' is selected, but sadly that isn't the case.

The WRX STI remains one of the quickest point-to-point new cars on the market, though. The Subaru feels like it's got more to offer than the stated 300bhp and 300lb ft of torque but we'll discover that shortly when we get it on the dyno. Grip levels are at an all-time high on uneven roads. It seems the faster you go, the more supple and at home the chassis becomes and, unlike most RWD European performance models these days, this one never indicates that it wants to spit you off the road. The platform is stunning and allows you to press on no matter the weather or surface conditions.



CHASSIS & BRAKES:

'Symmetry gives you balance' says Subaru, which is why the manufacturer has been perfecting its Symmetrical AWD system since 1972. The new WRX STI benefits from the same Driver's Control Centre Differential (DCCD) that was present on the last car. This allows the driver to fine-tune the Subaru's handling by adjusting an electromagnetic multi-plate transfer clutch and mechanical LSD via controls by the gear stick. In 'AUTO' mode there's a natural power bias to the front wheels to increase traction, so if you want more oversteer for tighter cornering you need to switch to 'MANUAL' and select a more 'negative' setting.

The Brembo brakes now benefit from larger 432mm discs all-round as opposed to the 326mm (front) and 316mm (rear) discs on the old car.





It seems the faster you go, the more supple and at home the chassis becomes...

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION:

At the heart of the new WRX STI is a familiar face in the form of a 2.5-litre EJ25 boxer flat-four. The running gear remains largely untouched from the outgoing model, with Subaru claiming a perfectly balanced 300bhp and 300lb ft of torque. Interestingly, those figures are somewhat shy, as you can see on page 50. The twin-scroll turbo provides beautifully smooth power delivery, with one of its entry chambers providing good torque at low speeds and low boost. The second chamber comes into play as the revs rise although, as to be expected, power starts to level off at around 5250rpm.

The six-speed manual gearbox retains the same gear ratios as the previous model and is still excellent. Gear changes are slick and precise, certainly more enjoyable than a clever automatic transmission. SI-Drive also remains, which is essentially three driving modes controlled through a rotary dial by the gearstick. We dyno-tested the WRX STI on all three settings and found boost and power levels remained almost identical, indicating the modes are simply variations in throttle mapping, Sport Sharp being the most responsive.



CONTACT:

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ON TRACK

Okay, so as you can see from the photos, we technically tested the Subaru on an airfield and not on track. We got in touch with our friends over at Car Limits who invited us up to North Weald to put the WRX STI properly through its paces. Having free rein of the place enabled us to push the car harder and harder, to try out the Driver's Control Centre Differential (DCCD) one setting at a time to determine just how effective the new car was as a track weapon.

Using cones, we setup a combination of tight and high-speed sweeping bends. We attacked them over and over, being more aggressive each time until the Subaru grip levels eventually began to fade. Amazingly, on

cold tyres, the car was hugely playful. Nailing the throttle on exiting the corner would result in welcome oversteer, a characteristic not usually associated with AWD/4WD cars. As the 245/40 Dunlop SP Sport Maxx tyres began to warm through, though, their sticky compound began moulding itself into and around every single crack and grain of gravel. The WRX STI's initially playful nature dispersed and all it wanted to do was get down to business and dispatch every bend with maximum efficiency. This is the Subaru's greatest asset but also its most frustrating quality and here's why...

There are times when you're not looking to be all precise and serious. Instead, you just

want a bit of fun. Unfortunately, even if you manually set the diff to its most negative (rear biased) setting, the rear just won't budge. Increase your entry speeds and levels of aggression and the Subaru reacts with more and more understeer. It means you can't really balance your exits on the throttle. In fact, if you want to break traction, you have to be truly violent to unsettle the rear. Sure, some of you are probably thinking this is 4WD car and not a tail-happy RWD one but most modern 4WD platforms have a heavy rear power delivery bias. Even the ultra-clever R35 GT-R wants to party with you at times.

The benefit of having such a stable chassis, though, is that on track you'd have to be really

**The WRX STI's initially playful nature
dispersed and all it wanted to do
was dispatch every bend with
maximum efficiency**



stupid to come unstuck. The new WRX STI will look after you, helping you pass significantly more powerful vehicles in the process. And for that reason, the Subaru remains one of the most appealing 'can do' cars. Need comfortable and practical family transport? Can do. Want to have a blast down uneven country lanes? Can do. Want to embarrass prestigious sports and supercars on track? Can do. Want to drive to and from the circuit and be able to make it up the driveway? Can do.

Before leaving North Weald, we also timed a number of launches, averaging a 0-62mph sprint time of 5.3secs. That's just 0.1 of a second off Subaru's sited time.



CONTACT:

Roger Clark Motorsport
W: www.rogerclarkmotorsport.co.uk
T: 01455 610728



TUNING POTENTIAL

Our initial impressions of the new WRX STI on the road and track have been superb. The truth is, though, that with Subarus being such enthusiast-focused cars, most hot models get modified in some way, shape or form. That being the case, there's one more aspect of the car that needs investigating and reviewing. Most mainstream magazines fail to analyse a car's tuning potential. We do things a little differently here at *Banzai*, though, which is why we took our test car to Roger Clark Motorsport (RCM) for a thorough examination on the specialist's dyno cell.

Oldest Clark brother, Matt, kindly took charge of the Subaru for this part of our comprehensive test. As he headed to the cell, inching past Gobstoppers I and II (RCM's Time Attack weapons) in the process, we

knew we'd come to the right place. What Matt and Olly don't know about Subaru tuning isn't worth knowing. With the car secured down, oil levels checked and optimal operating temperatures reached, Matt short-shifted through the gears and began the first of three runs. All three returned virtually identical figures: 312.3bhp and 324.9lb ft of torque. That's 12bhp and almost 25lb ft of torque more than Subaru quotes.

Out-of-the-box, then, things are looking good for the EJ25. Sadly, though, RCM was quick to highlight some of the boxer's tuning restrictions. Olly goes into more detail in his section to the right, but with the EJ25 essentially being a bored-out EJ20 with cast internals instead of forged, the later 2.5-litre engine is integrally weaker than its

predecessor. Fit RCM higher tensile strength studs and uprated head gaskets and power can be raised safely to 360bhp. If you want to go further, you'll need a new turbo and oversized (14mm) high tensile strength studs that require the block to be modified to fit. You'll need to think about a front-mounted intercooler, too, as well as uprated valves and bearings. Even then, about 500bhp is as far as you'd want to go.

Olly explained to us that it's all about foundations. If you build a big house on weak foundations you're going to come unstuck. You're much better off starting with a tried and tested closed-deck EJ20 or EJ22. It may seem somewhat backwards fitting older running gear into a newer car but if you do, the sky's the limit in terms of tuning potential.



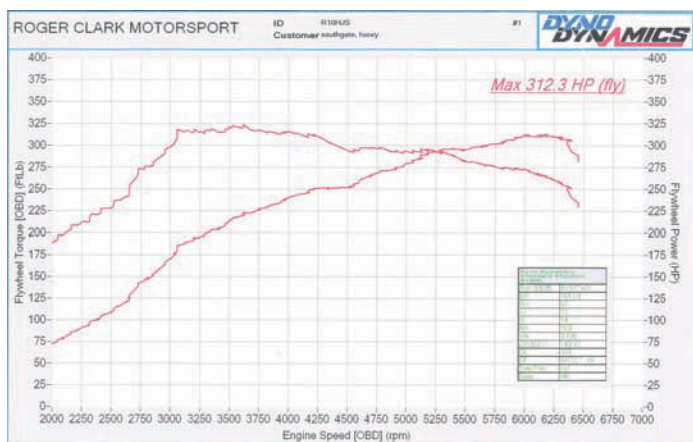
TUNER'S OPINION

Roger Clark Motorsport is one of the most respected Subaru specialists in the world. Here, Olly Clark shares his views of the new WRX STI:

From a driving point of view the new WRX STI is really good. It feels like it wants to work with you. It's really well balanced and the steering feels significantly better than on the hatch. It's weightier and has more feel. It's what the hatch should have been. It's about right. The brakes aren't particularly aggressive but they feel strong. So, it's a great road car out-of-the-box and there's a lot you could do handling-wise depending on what you were going to use it for.

From an engine tuning point of view, though, it's not great. The main reason for that is the EJ25 itself. The EJ25 is the same size block as the EJ20 but with a 99.5mm cylinder bore instead of a 92mm bore. Put simply, that means it's weaker and less suitable for big power. The biggest problem, though, is the piston ringlands. Subaru used to use forged pistons in its boxer engines but now uses cast ones instead. These fail and can cause big problems when they do. Head gaskets also go but we do stud and gasket upgrades to help this weakness. If you want big power, though, it's more cost-effective to start with an older EJ20 or EJ22.

Olly Clark, RCM



The WRX STI consistently produced around 312bhp and 325lb ft of torque. The graph shows a smooth power delivery, the clever twin-scroll clearly doing its job well. Peak torque was earlier than expected and tails off after 3600rpm





VERDICT

The new WRX STI is an impressive machine. In most reviews so far it's been compared to modern European hatches and sports cars, many of which boast bigger power figures, faster sprint and top speed times, as well as clever automatic transmission options. On paper and on face value, then, the Subaru may initially appear a little out-of-date. Spend time behind the wheel on track and on the road, though, and you'll be suitably impressed. Drive most of the cars it's been pitted against at high speed on uneven surfaces and they get awfully twitchy. You find yourself backing off.

In the WRX STI, though, there's no such uncertainty. It doesn't matter where you are or what the conditions, the Subaru is rapid... seriously rapid. If you love the sensation early Imprezas give, you'll love this platform. It's

more of a refined, modern GD8, rather than an advancement of the hatch. And once you've accepted the latest Subaru for what it is, you won't be disappointed.

If you're buying a new WRX STI primarily as a road car, perhaps with the occasional track day in mind, the standard power output will suffice. Fit a less vocally restrictive exhaust and the Subaru should provide you with all the thrills you need. If you regularly find yourself on track, we recommend getting a stud and gasket conversion carried out at RCM. It'll provide you with peace of mind and allow you to wind up the boost a little. If big power is your thing, though, you'll seriously want to consider if this is the car for you as there will be excessive costs involved in satisfying your demands 🚬

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Engine: 2.5-litre twin-scroll turbocharged 16v boxer flat-four

Transmission: Six-speed manual

Power: 312.3bhp at 6150rpm (RCM dyno)

Torque: 324.9lb ft at 3600rpm (RCM dyno)

0-60mph: 5.3 seconds

Top Speed: 159mph (claimed)

Wheels/Tyres: 8.5x18" lightweight alloys with 245/40 Dunlop SP Sport Maxx tyres

Brakes: Front and rear Brembo brakes with 432mm discs all-round

Suspension: Fully independent setup with gas-filled shocks and coil springs, front and rear anti-roll bars



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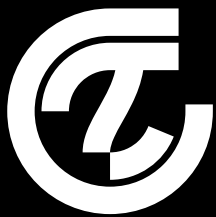


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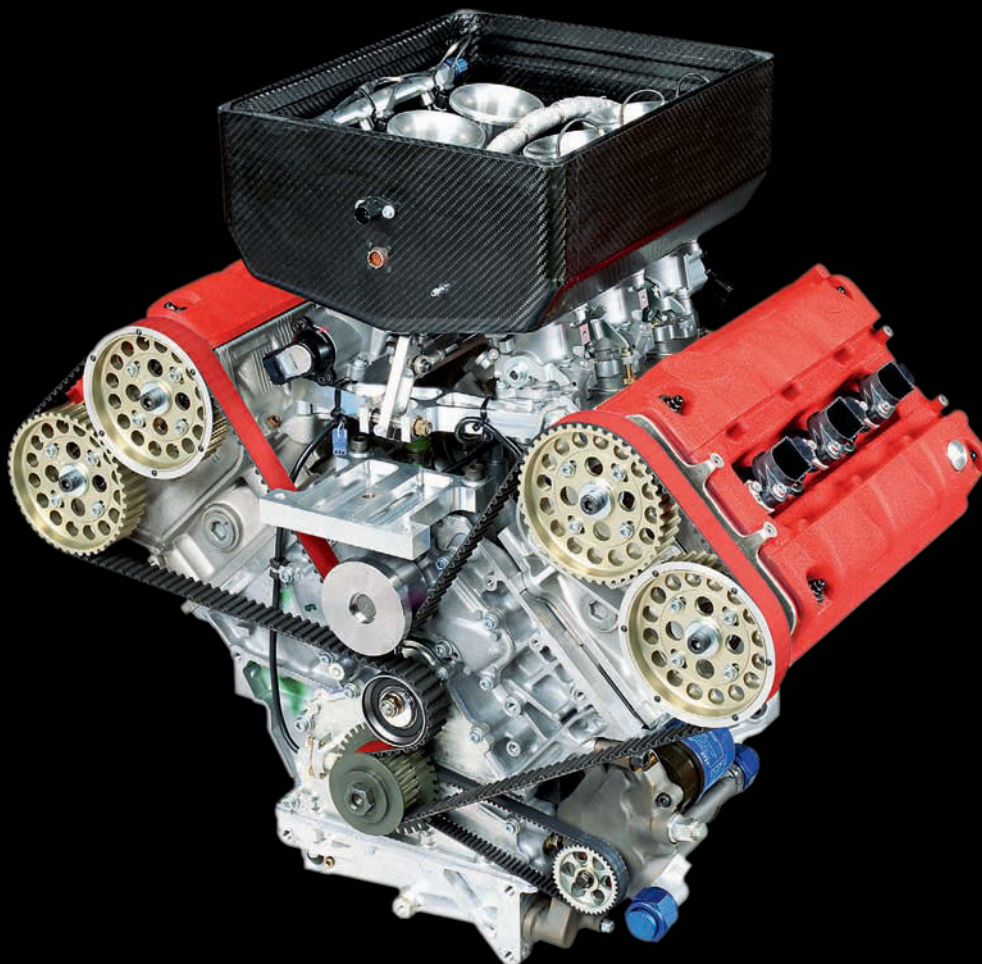
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| C110 Nissan Skyline 2000 GT-X |



IRON FIST, V

Pat's initial plan was to lovingly restore his run-down Kenmeri Skyline back to factory spec, but the tuning bug inevitably got the better of him, leaving a savage RB-powered missile in its wake...

Words and photos: Tony Saggu



ELVET GLOVE

**“It’s such an awesome
looking car straight
out-of-the-box there’s
no need to change
much at all”**





“It happens all the time,” laughed Southern California Shakotan Skyline tuner Patrick Soliman. “Just last week some guy was driving through the parking lot staring at the car, the poor sap wasn’t looking where he was going and creamed a centre divider!” Stopping traffic, dropping jaws, blowing minds and knocking socks clean off is getting to be something of a habit as Pat’s latest project takes the US retro Japanese car scene by storm.

Presented for the first time at the recent Japanese Classic Car Show in Long Beach, the newly restored and classically customised 1973 Nissan Skyline has set a new standard for faithfully reproduced *zokusha*-style machines outside of the Land of the Rising Sun. The transformation has taken the US navy aviation structural mechanic the better part of ten years to piece together, and though Pat reports the journey hasn’t always been fun and games, he insists owning a classic piece of Jap street car culture has been worth all the work.

“Back in the Nineties, me and my friends would watch old vintage Japanese racing videos and dream of maybe one day owning an old Skyline,” recalled Pat. “As far back as I can remember, I’ve loved all types of car models and styles, but the old school Japanese cars were always something special. My dad always bought and fixed up S30 and S130 Datsun Zs, TA21 Toyota Celicas, SA22 Mazda RX-7s...”

The early Nineties saw an explosive growth of the US import scene and Pat got in on the ground floor. “Everyone was fixing up any import they could find trying to figure out what was fast,” he recalled. “Most of my friends had Civics, Silvias and Accords, which back in the day were considered the hot ticket. I couldn’t really afford anything new so I did what I was most familiar with.”

Cheap and cool meant going old school and a faded metallic brown 1972 240z fit the bill to a tee, with dual down-draft Webers, polished Enkei mesh wheels and a tonne of potential lightening Pat’s savings account to the tune of just \$700. “It was an automatic

with no reverse,” laughed Pat. “I planned on converting it to stick but that never happened. I primed it red, cut the springs, threw on a front lip, removed the front and rear bumpers and welded a cherry bomb muffler on it. It wasn’t the fastest thing on the street, but it looked awesome and spat out flames on deceleration.” A few months into ownership, some light fingered losers put paid to Pat’s grand plans for the Z. “The theft didn’t tame my addiction for cars though,” he told us. “I’ve had lots of everything since; a 260z, a 280z, a 280zx, a ‘74 Mazda RX-4, two 1969 BMW 2002s, two BMW 320is, a ‘70 Mercedes 250, a Mitsubishi Cordia, a Datsun 510... oh and the Skyline of course.”

A decade and a half after getting his feet wet with the ill-fated Z, Pat finally stumbled on to the ultimate gearhead goldmine; the Kenmeri classic of his dreams. Although money finally changed hands in 2006, Pat told us the car had been on his radar for years. “It’s a bit of a story,” he assured us. “The history of the car goes back to the Eighties. The truth of how it got to the USA,

| C110 Nissan Skyline 2000 GT-X |



Engine: RB26DETT from a R33 GT-R, Precision Turbo 6262 dual ceramic ball-bearing turbocharger, Hybrid Performance turbo manifold, Griffin dual-pass radiator, Spal fan, 46mm wastegate, 50mm TIAL blow-off valve, 850cc injectors, AEM 320l/ph fuel pump, GReddy boost controller, NGK Iridium spark plugs, Nismo fuel pressure regulator, custom intercooler, Microtec LT-16 ECU

Transmission: RB25DET gearbox, custom transmission mount, OS GIKEN dual plate clutch, Wilwood clutch master cylinder, Z31 Nissan 300ZX R200 rear limited-slip differential

Chassis: 10x15" and 12x15" SSR Techno Phantom wheels with 225/50 and 235/50 tyres on the front and rear respectively, Tein camber plates, custom mounted QA1 rear coilovers with Eibach springs, custom front coilovers with Eibach springs, Techno Toy Tuning adjustable trailing arms, 280ZX front brakes, 200SX rear brakes

Exterior: Works-style wide-body flare kit and front lip, GT-R front grille

Interior: Recaro reclining seats, Sabell harnesses, Nardi steering wheel, Autometer Ultra Lite gauges, Razo pedals

Contacts/thanks: Paul Bischoff from Boss Garage for tuning and wiring, custom paint and bodywork by Erik from West Jones Auto Claims Solutions, custom wheel size by Araya Wheels, help from the homies Skyline Mike, Gill, Topher, 510Mel from Wild Cards, Jesse from FYS, Edd from Stack of Dimes, Matt, CRX Phil and last but not least I want to thank my wife Sterling and kids for understanding my passion for cars

how many different engines it's had, where it was raced and how many times it's been painted is very fuzzy.

"I first saw the car in 2000 when a local guy Paul bought it. It had old, cracked white paint with green, yellow and blue stripes on the side with 'Curry House' painted on the back... it's a Japanese thing," he laughed. The story goes that Paul was more of a Hakosuka guy. So when Pat's mate Mike happened to have one of the boxy bad boys up for sale, a little wheeling, dealing and a few dollars later Pat jumped in to snag the Kenmeri, leaving a happy Paul with the Hako.

The whole deal was a bit of a convoluted affair but luckily for Pat not a lot of cash was involved. Though reasonably cheap, the Kenmeri was no dream car when bought. "The thing was a nightmare to be honest," he shrugged. "The interior, what there was of it, was not installed, lots of parts were in boxes, it had no brakes, no wires, the dashboard was removed with broken gauges, it had a welded R180 diff... it was junk really, a major project for sure."

The original plan was to keep the car as near to stock as possible, maybe some deep dished rollers and a set of wide arches thrown in but nothing too drastic. "I never would have thought it would go this far," chuckled Pat. "At first I wanted to do a traditional silver GT-R clone build, but as time and my skill level progressed I decided to go a different and more extreme route. I didn't want to have another silver or white Kenmeri Skyline GT-R clone with an L series motor on triple carbs and big cam. It's been done, you know," he continued. "I've nothing against traditional and purist builds, but since my car was already chopped up, rusty and wasn't a real GT-R with a twin-cam S20 engine I decided to throw out the rulebook."

The engine, or lack of it, was Pat's first challenge. The coupé has endured a couple of half-hearted attempts at classic motivation under the bonnet over the years; a barely functional L28 followed by a marginally better triple-carb L26. "It had a half-installed SR20DET in it when I got the car," explained Pat. "I finished off the swap and actually

drove it around for a while like that, but that motor had a tendency to blow up quite a lot!"

A little shaking of the SoCal Japanese retro car grapevine turned up a fully built RB26DETT motor liberated from an R33 GT-R with an RB25 two-wheel drive gearbox attached. Pat admits the drivetrain took a little persuasion to shoehorn into the shell, but starting with a sliced-up Swiss cheese chassis actually helped. "It was really a case of cutting out all the existing mounts, slicing open the transmission tunnel and firewall, dropping in the drivetrain and then fabricating everything to make it work... simple as that," he smiled. We suspect working on US navy fighter jets all day may have taught our man a few useful tricks...

Turning up the mad meter a few clicks comes in the shape of a 6262 dual ceramic ball-bearing Precision Turbo. The setup is running a fairly mild tune which spins the dyno to the tune of just over 550 ponies. "There's nearer 700 in it, but five and a half keeps it reliable. I don't want to blow this one up by over-working it," explained Pat.



Have you ever seen such a
cleanly installed RB26 swap?

| C110 Nissan Skyline 2000 GT-X |



The legendary Japanese powerplant looks as good as it goes, the immaculately detailed engine sitting in a stunningly executed shaved and smoothed bay. The engine room is only the start however, as the junk-to-jewel transformation of this curvaceous crimson coupé boasts bodywork that literally stops traffic. "The sexy curves are stock, we just fine-tuned them a little," Pat told us. "It's such an awesome looking car straight out-of-the-box there's no need to change much at all."

Pat's mate Erik at West Jones Auto Claims Solutions in Rancho Cucamonga got the call to rescue the rust-ravaged shell. Every panel needed fairly extensive work to restore it to its original condition; new sheet metal wasn't an option so months of painstaking metal massaging were called for. While the shop was busy with the hammer and dolly, Pat scoured the 'net, as the list of missing parts wasn't a short one. "Some parts took literally years to find," recalled Pat. "The rear glass for example was a six-year mission to find, bought and shipped from Fiji of all places. In a lot of cases if the parts weren't available we

just fabricated new ones." Pat admits those voluptuous works wide-body arches, ordered direct from Japan, are probably his favourite part of the car, and it's pretty hard to disagree with him.

"The paint also took a while to nail down," he told us. "I wanted something metallic red but after going back and forth with different shades of red with my painter and Erik, I told him to just paint it and surprise me." The custom mixed scarlet metallic topcoat may not be normal faire for a bad boy street racer, but it fits this classy coupé's iron-fist-in-a-velvet-glove character perfectly.

Adding to the killer street presence are a quartet of custom retro Techno Phantom hoops lurking under the fat fenders: "I was coming out of the bank and a guy was admiring a SR20-powered Datsun 510 I had a while ago, we talked for a few minutes and as luck would have it he mentioned he had a set of 6x14" SSR Techno Phantom wheels for sale," revealed Pat. "I'd been looking for a set for ages, so needless to say I ran back in the bank and we did the deal right there."

However, after the arches were bolted on to the Skyline it quickly became clear weedy six-inch wide rollers would not cut it. "I measured out the width and offset and handed the wheels off to Araya Wheels in Orange County to do its magic," he told us. The rears are now twice their original width and an inch has been added to the height for good measure – that's a foot wide per rim out back! The fronts are a 'tame' ten inches of glorious girth at the steering end.

Pat admits the car is far from complete, he reckons it's just "presentable enough to drive" despite picking up accolades and trophies wherever it goes. He insists it's not a show car; it was built to be driven and driven hard. The interior "still needs work" apparently, the restoration with old school Recaros, a period Nardi tiller and custom Autometer gauges in a rejuvenated cabin looks perfect to us, but Pat's a bit of a perfectionist. To our eyes this lovingly restored and tastefully restyled rouge rudeboy is a lesson in classic muscle car chic; power, style and attitude never looked so cool ✨

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| Z33 Nissan Fairlady Z |





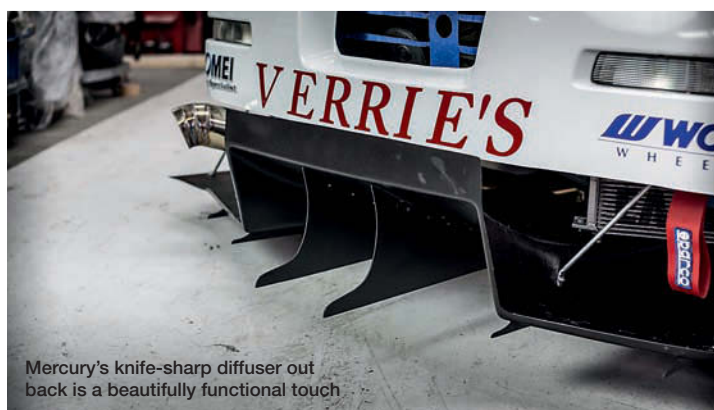
NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Nissan's modern-day Z-cars are beginning to prove themselves as solid and affordable drift car bases. Mercury Enterprises' example strays far from its 350Z roots, though, with a wild motorsport body and 1000bhp 2JZ motor propelling it into this year's Formula D Japan championship in style...

Words: Sam Preston

Photos: JC Pepino (Work Wheels)

"We wanted to
create the best
tuned Fairlady Z
in the world"



Mercury's knife-sharp diffuser out
back is a beautifully functional touch





Up until very recently Nissan's S-chassis cars undeniably ruled the roost when it came to drifting events across the globe. Right from the days of Keiichi Tsuchiya getting bored of driving in a straight line through to the present, you'd be hard pressed to find any drifting competition without at least a handful of Silvias there kicking up some smoke.

But as S-chassis donor cars begin to dwindle in numbers and the price of decent examples rises, drift teams are becoming far more creative in their choice of base car. Just look at Yoichi Imamura's controversial V8-powered Lexus LFA unveiled earlier this year,

for example. Or Japspeed's bonkers Nissan 370Z which will be piloted by Shane Lynch in the 2015 season of the BDC. 'Different' has become cool, and the drift scene is becoming deliciously diverse as a result.

Over in Tokyo, Noritsugu Totani has certainly cottoned on to this trend. An accomplished drifter who has become famous locally for being pretty handy in an S14, he thought that 2015 was the perfect time to step up his game. With his crosshairs focused on the US-conceived Formula Drift Japan championship, he knew it would take something a little more unique to gain respect in the paddock.

It took a passing visit to his friends at local car tuner/dealer Mercury Enterprises for an

idea to formulate in Totani-san's head.

Mercury manager Ken Sato explained that the company was in the process of creating a GT3-inspired wide-arch kit for the Z33 Nissan Fairlady Z (350Z to Europeans), and proposed that Totani-san's drift car could act as the perfect demo vehicle to show it off. A 350Z was certain to turn heads at the Formula Drift events but would Totani-san and Mercury be able to transform this relatively tame grand tourer into a competitive drift car? After a whole lot of work, the answer is most definitely 'yes'.

Although predominantly a car and parts supplier, Mercury Enterprises was no stranger to supporting successful drift cars before this

| Z33 Nissan Fairlady Z |





Performance: 1000bhp at 7800rpm, 564lb ft of torque at 4500rpm (estimated)

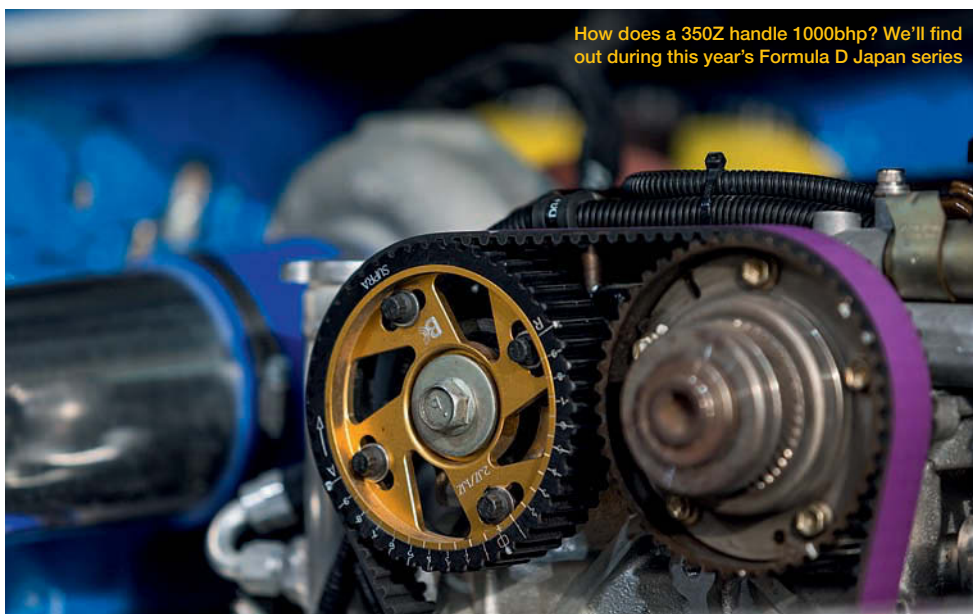
Engine: Toyota 2JZ-GTE DOHC 24v straight-six engine conversion, Brian Crower 3400cc stroker kit, 1000cc/min fuel injectors, Turbosmart fuel pressure regulator, billet aluminium crankshaft, forged pistons, TOMEI 264-degree camshafts, Infiniti Q45 throttle mechanism, Garrett GCX4088 turbocharger, Trust intercooler, GReddy Profec electronic boost controller, Turbosmart wastegate, custom Koyo oil cooler, Koyo Type-R radiator in boot, Trust exhaust manifold, custom stainless steel Mercury exhaust system with turned-down tip, HKS F-CON V Pro ECU, NOS nitrous oxide system in boot (yet to be set up)

Transmission: Hollinger six-speed sequential gearbox, OS GIKEN triple-plate clutch, TOMEI Technical Trax advanced two-way limited-slip differential

Chassis: 10.5x18" ET +25 Work Emotion D9R one-piece cast alloy wheels front and rear, finished in white, 265/35 Pinso tyres front and rear, custom Trust dampers with Swift 16kg/mm front and Hyperco 12kg/mm rear springs, Drift Max front arms, Ikeya Formula rear arms, OEM brake calipers and discs front and rear with dual caliper conversion on rear axle

Exterior: Mercury GT3-inspired full body kit comprising front and rear bumpers, front and rear wide-arch extensions, side and rear diffusers and rear duck-tail spoiler, lightweight wing mirrors with incorporated cameras, LED headlights

Interior: Fully-stripped interior, spot-welded body shell with custom multi-point roll-cage, Bride fixed-back bucket seat with Takata four-point harness, Nardi 350mm leather steering wheel, Racepack LCD digi-dash with integrated rear-view screens from wing mirror cameras, Tilton pedalbox, ASD handbrake, ATL 15-litre fuel cell



How does a 350Z handle 1000bhp? We'll find out during this year's Formula D Japan series

particular pairing began. You may be familiar with Tetsuya Hibino's AE86 Corolla which has been a regular front-runner in recent D1 GP events across Japan; a car which is also modified, maintained and fettled at the same premises that this 350Z would eventually be conceived in. Totani-san therefore needed very little persuasion to leave his donor car, picked up in the summer of 2014, in the hands of the Mercury team.

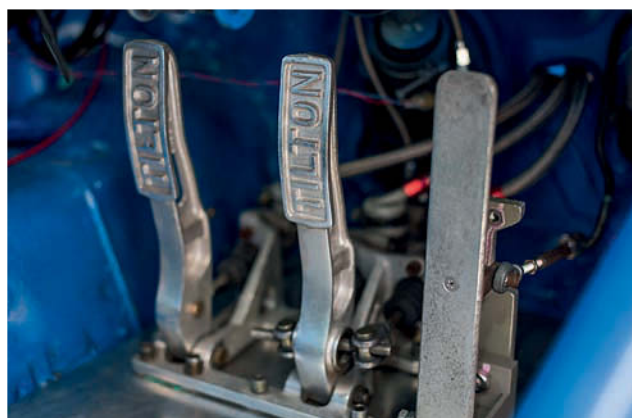
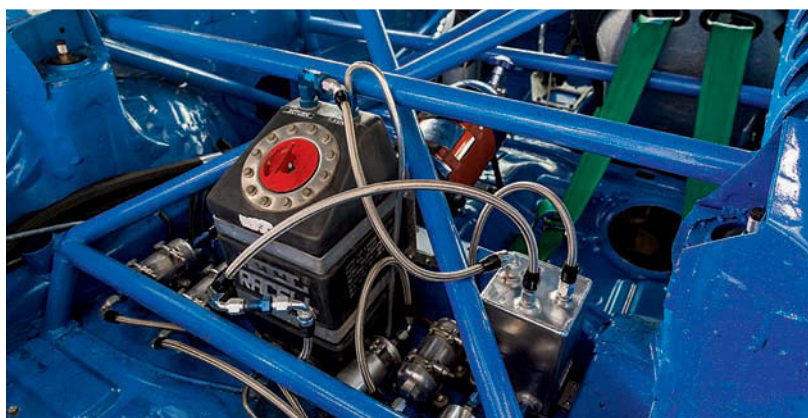
Ken Sato and his team began by setting their sights on getting the now-finalised Mercury wide-body kit onto the car. With Liberty Walk recently releasing blueprints for its own incarnation of a wide 350Z, now was as good a time as any to start promoting parts for this popular little coupé as it becomes more affordable than ever.

After several excruciating hours with an angle grinder, it's clear to see the GT3 racing inspiration in the finished bodylines. Just check out that heavily cut-away front bumper that's just asking for a meaty intercooler to be slotted in behind it, finished off with the snow plough-esque splitter. The wheel arch extensions are menacingly wide whilst retaining an air of motorsport practicality to them, especially when filled with the heavily

dished Work Emotion forged wheels, allowing the car to sit several inches wider than a stock version. But it's the little details that set Mercury's efforts apart from others. Check out the air diffusers located around the wheel arches. These gorgeously functional vents not only look fantastic but add further aero assistance for when the Z is slicing through the air, especially when going sideways. Which, of course, will be quite a lot of the time in this particular car. It's nice to see that Mercury has used a subtle duck-tail rear spoiler out back, too, going against current drifting trends to fit the biggest, loudest rear wing possible.

With a Mercury Enterprises livery whipped up, Totani-san's Z was shown off at the 2014 Nismo Festival in November. "The race-look is gorgeous and went down really well!" Ken Sato explains. Feedback from the car's first public appearance couldn't have been more positive. With no mechanical work carried out at this point, however, the bonnet remained firmly shut throughout the show. The Mercury team had less than a month before its first planned testing day with the car, which meant that the engine, chassis and almost all other modifications that would give the Z a fighting

| Z33 Nissan Fairlady Z |



chance competitively needed attention in less than four weeks. Lucky that Sato-san already had a few plans in place behind the scenes.

"We wanted to create the best tuned Fairlady Z in the world," Sato-san says, justifying his reasoning for the extreme measures taken in the engine bay of this particular car. Very familiar with almost every Japanese engine ever created over the last couple of decades, it didn't take long for him to rule out the possibility of keeping the VQ35 V6 engine in the car, citing the lack of tuning potential and power gains as the main reasons. If you want a whole lot more power and you own a Nissan, a Skyline GT-R's RB26DETT lump ought to do the trick, right? After some long discussions with driver Totani-san, the guys agreed that a Toyota 2JZ engine was in fact more familiar to the pair, both in terms of driving and tuning. And so a low-mileage example was snapped up.

Before the boosted straight-six was dropped in place it was overhauled with a 3.4-litre stroker kit, a bigger, single Garrett turbo and a list of other enhancements that's as long as your arm. The Koyo radiator, for example, was cleverly relocated to the sparse boot to create

more room up front, whilst the engine itself benefits from such luxuries as forged pistons, hot cams and a beautiful billet crankshaft. Think of the sort of stuff that deserves to be placed on a plaque behind glass, and you'll get an idea about the quality of this build.

"I was watching the car in the early stages of testing at the Nikko Circuit, where the power literally ripped the diff off its mountings due to the torque," photographer JC laughs. That's what over 1000bhp will do to a standard 350Z differential! Needless to say, this episode resulted in a much heavier-duty TOMEI two-way diff replacing the standard item. Further testing is due to be carried out before the Formula D season begins but the Mercury guys are over the moon with the results so far. "The engine is no doubt the main attraction!" an excited Sato-san grins, "considering almost everything is custom-built, there are far less preliminary problems than we'd expected." With more power than anticipated on tap, a Holinger six-speed sequential gearbox was sourced from Australia. If there's one gearbox that's going to handle the power, this is probably it.

Totani-san's work space inside the car is an

extremely thorough and no-nonsense affair. Touches such as the Tilton pedalbox, ATL fuel cell and ASD hydraulic handbrake lever are all top-drawer items which means the car feels finished in a similar standard to that of something such as a World Touring Car. It also allows Totani-san to keep focused on the job when strapped into the single Bride bucket seat. Then there's the hidden surprises, such as the digital cameras located in the wing mirrors which feed live images to the Racepack digital dash in front of the Nardi steering wheel and the yet-to-be-activated nitrous oxide kit should the team need to give even more of a kick to the rear wheels. Drifting has certainly come a long way in recent times, hasn't it?

We're excited to see how the Mercury 'GT3' Fairlady Z gets on in the five rounds of Formula Drift Japan this year and wish Norisugu Totani the best of luck in piloting this beast. Based on the passion that's been poured into this build, we've got high hopes for some decent results. But perhaps even more exciting is the news that Mercury is in the process of developing a road-going 350Z with the very same wide-arch kit adorned to it. We'll take one in black, please... 🍀

new Emotion CR2P



artofwheel.com

STAGE DRIVE

We head to Brands Hatch to taste MotorSport Vision's new GT86-infused RallyMaster Driving Experience...

Words: Andy Basoo Photos: Gary Hawkins



Experience days have become the staple present for guys who love cars. The opportunity to pilot exotic supercars and drive at high speeds away from the public highway is a truly attractive proposition. The truth is, though, most experience days are quite restrictive. You can pay in the region of £200 for five or six laps at half throttle with an 'instructor' telling you to ease off, brake and slow down every few seconds. So while you certainly get a taste of what it's like to be behind the wheel of something rather special, as well as being able to tell your mates about what you've driven, such days don't offer you much opportunity to learn and further your own driving abilities. MotorSport Vision (MSV) does things a little differently...

MSV's driving experiences are tailor-made to help you improve your skills as a driver. A number of the instructors who train you are fully-qualified pros, individuals who by the letter of motorsport law act as examiners for those applying for official ARDS and BARS licences. So, if you arrive with a desire to listen and apply the guidance offered, you'll leave with a vastly improved driver skill set

and have huge amounts of rewarding fun along the way.

We were recently invited down to Brands Hatch to sample its new RallyMaster experience, an invite we simply couldn't pass up when we heard MSV had just prepared all-new Toyota GT86s to use on its rally stages. Previously, FWD Peugeots had been utilised, but the new RWD platforms provide much more tail-out fun!

On arrival, all participants are required to sign in before sitting through a useful briefing. Naturally, open-faced crash helmets are provided, so all you need to bring with you on the day is your full driving licence, which you must have held for at least one year. You'll be part of a very small group, usually made up of no more than six participants. In order to maximise your time behind the wheel, your group will then be divided into two. Brands has two gravel/Tarmac stages so you'll spend time mastering both.

On our visit, we spent time at just one of the stages, but what a stage it is! It's made up of changing surfaces, flowing chicanes, tight hairpins, short straights and aggressive undulations. If we're honest, both features writer Sam and I felt slightly intimidated by

the layout, but we were quickly put at ease by our instructor.

After our instructor had been round for a few sighting laps to check the course conditions, it was my turn to get strapped into the driver's seat. Sam would go after me. I've spent a lot of time in GT86s these past few years so I instantly felt at home. That said, the examples I've driven haven't been caged, didn't have FIA-approved Corbeau Forza Sport buckets or TRS harnesses and didn't have dual-controls. Yes, the six GT86s run at Brands all have extra pedals in the passenger footwell. These allow the instructor to offer assistance if things get away from you, while there's also engine cut-off switches/buttons on the dash and on the upper left section of the cage in case you come unstuck. I was hoping that wasn't going to happen...

The experienced driver to my left explained how we'd take a couple of slow sighting laps to learn the stage layout and then start to wind up the pace gradually. That was fine by me, so I eased away from the start line and short shifted into second. The opening section sees you take a medium right left. What makes the combo so exciting is a short, steep incline between the two corners,



After a couple of slow laps, the instructor was soon telling me to push...



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| RallyMaster Driving Experience |



Toyota GT86

MSV uses GT86s both at Brands Hatch and Oulton Park, all of which run virtually stock FA20 2.0-litre boxer engines. Other than an uprated clutch and free-flowing exhaust, the arrangement is untouched. It's in the chassis department that things get interesting with Bilstein suspension, lightweight Speedline Corse wheels and Pirelli Cinturato tyres all making an appearance. Under the bonnet, there's also a Cusco front strut brace which incorporates a brake master cylinder brace, making both the front end turn-in and brake pedal feel more predictable.

As has already been touched on, the cabin has been partially stripped with lightweight Corbeau Forza Sport seats, TRS harnesses, dished Alcantara wheel, cut-off switches, extinguisher system and an FIA-approved roll-cage all present. The handbrake has had the parking lock removed, meaning after a quick tug to encourage the rear wheels to lose traction, the lever drops straight back down. These cars have been thoughtfully prepared for the entry-level rally driving, with a clear focus on control applied.



You'll leave with an improved driver skill set and have huge amounts of fun along the way





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meaning within a second or two you find yourself a couple of meters higher than before. There's a short straight along the raised platform before you're faced with a 45° left-hander, which is blind as the track falls away beneath you back down to ground level.

It's sharpish on the brakes next to slow the Toyota down for a sweeping 200° hairpin, followed by a shallower right bend and 90° left, a section that allows you accelerate progressively throughout. A quick dab on the middle pedal scrubs off some speed before the next right, which after exiting sees you looking up a steep hill in front. It's hard on the throttle so as not to get bogged down. The incline means you need very little in terms of braking for the next left-hand hairpin, which after completing sees you pointing back downhill. There's a flowing right left which is made all the more complicated by the gradient. Gravity sees you picking up speed and seems to pull the rear of the car out as you change direction, before arriving at the water splash (big puddle) and the final 90° right and foam bales on the finish line.

After a couple of slow laps, the instructor was soon telling me to push. The GT86 is so well setup that for most corners, all you need

is a quick dab of the brakes and as you turn in to approach your clipping point, the rear of the car progressively comes round. Once you're used to its predictable behaviour, you can ease on the throttle and opposite lock to control the slide.

My initial problem was that I was thinking about every corner that I was arriving at. Such short-sighted focus meant I was arriving at the next corner at the wrong angle and speed. What our instructor helped me to think about was the track ahead. Once you get a feel for the GT86, you begin thinking less about the what's going on underneath you and more about what's coming up. The connecting sections between the bends became the subject of my thoughts and little by little my transitions became smoother. Instead of corners, I started to divide the stage up into sections, learning to flow through complexes.

The final downhill chicane proved my nemesis throughout my time in the car, with the increasing speed catching me out numerous times seeing me spin out. By the end I felt I was almost there. Another couple of laps and I would have been ready to push on, but I'd already used more than my quota of time in the car, seeing Sam have a shorter

stint than me. Interestingly, his experience was very similar though.

"I found it difficult at first to differentiate between track driving and rally driving," he said. "My gut reaction is that you take the racing line and clip the apex, but the instructor quickly got me thinking differently and flooring it to get the back end round the corner. The car was awesome and really predictable. It's actually the first time I've driven a GT86 but I can see what all the hype is about. The day provides a good introduction to rallying and the course is seriously cool. If you want, MSV can help you progress all the way through to attaining your official BARS licence, which is surprisingly cheap to do in comparison to achieving your ARDS race licence."

Both Sam and I were amazed at how much we learned in such a short period of time. The full RallyMaster Driving Experience gives you two 20-minute sessions in the car, meaning you have time in between to really meditate on your progress and struggles. With your instructor's help, you're able to master your car control and really kick on, making the day a truly rewarding experience, one we highly recommend you book yourself on to ✨



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Words: Daniel Bevis Photos: Steve McCann

ESTATE OF



BJF Performance Tuning's bug-eye wagon utilises one of the arguably less desirable Impreza bases, and transforms it into something utterly devastating. Here's one artist that's gone totally off the rails...

An interesting phenomenon of the modern trappings of celebrity is how child stars can go spectacularly off the rails when they grow up. Look at how Justin Bieber transmuted from fresh-faced pop tart to tattooed party animal; how the once-matey One Direction now dislike each other so much that they arrive at gigs in separate planes; how Screech from

Saved By The Bell went on to distribute home-made, er, cuddle films. But perhaps the ultimate example of this behaviour is little Macaulay Culkin – he began acting at the age of four, he was only nine when he starred in *Home Alone*; by the time he reached his twenties, he was setting out an unfortunate template for Bieber to emulate.

But why are we talking about Macaulay Culkin? Well, two reasons. Firstly, this bug-

THE ART



eye Impreza wagon that's under scrutiny today fits neatly into the child-star-gone-wild pattern. The first-generation Impreza kind of came out of nowhere from a manufacturer arguably better known for farm yard runabouts than performance machines; it rocketed to success and celebrity by virtue of its power, agility, intelligent engineering, and ability to snare podium after podium with ballistic fervour. When the wide-eyed second-

generation arrived, the Impreza was luxuriating in its prowess, self-aware and boisterous – faster, stiffer, angrier. Uglier? Some thought so. Not us, but some. And the second reason? Quite simply that this particular Morette-clad bug-eye, crafted out of pure and eager malice by BJF Performance Tuning of Clydebank, is very much the Kevin McCallister of Subarus. (Kevin being Culkin's character in Home

Alone, of course.) It's forthright, uncompromising, proactive, and doesn't take any prisoners.

Intrigued? Let's begin under the bonnet, shall we? "This EJ20 has a fully-forged bottom end," Barry Forster assures us (Barry is the big cheese at BJF as well as being the owner of the car). And, as you'll surely remember from that scary scene in the movie with the furnace, having some robust

| GD8 Subaru Impreza WRX |

pyrotechnics in the basement is a solid foundation upon which to build a plan. "We've fitted Manley con rods, Mahle pistons, ACL race bearings and a Cosworth steel crank," he tells us. This is all belt-and-braces stuff for a big-power Subaru build, and it makes sense to have a solid and dependable set of guts if you're going to be throwing a significant amount of boost into the mix. But hold your horses, we'll get to that.

The aesthetics of the underbonnet area speak volumes about the care which has been lavished upon it; cast your eye over the bay and you'll absorb myriad details that march in front of you like the conveyor belt prizes on *The Generation Game*. The airbrushing, for starters, is a very old-school touch (or a French/Belgian Noughties style, depending on your perspective), and the copious colour-coding neatly complements the keen focus on having polished bits of metal under there, glinting in the half-light as we peer into the bowels of the thing. Subaru's boxer four-pots have never been, it has to be said, the most beautiful of engines, but with the sort of treatment that Barry's lavished upon this one, it's impressive to see how they can be transformed. Just check out the polished big-bore pipework, the prominent Cosworth logo taking centre-stage, the

eagerness for form and function to work in perfect synchronous harmony. "There's a Forge front-mount intercooler fitted, with a polished hard pipe kit," Barry explains, "so we've relocated the oil cooler to the top of the engine – if anything, it justifies the bonnet scoop being there!"

That hands us a neat segue to look at the aesthetics of the car's exterior, as said scoop has been the subject of a conversion to a larger, more gaping example. Sort of like Kevin McCallister's wide-open mouth as he slaps aftershave on to his tender young face (no, stop it – the simile isn't getting more tortured, just go with it).

Now, there's a certain stigma that comes with estate cars. They're for people who own numerous sizeable dogs or have large families that they like to drive across Europe on camping holidays; they're for taking hedge-clippings to the dump, for helping your mate shift his sofa, for delivering those extra chairs to the church fete in time for the judging of the jam competition. That's all tommyrot today, of course, with the advent of the hot wagon – think Audi RS4/6, AMG C63/E63 estate, the obscure-but-devastating BMW M5 Touring – although these examples are a) European and b) not drawn from the same lot as when the bug-eye was stalking

the land, surprising people with its combo of junk-in-the-trunk styling and turbo thrills. It was a trailblazer, a sledgehammer to the sleepy ideas of sensibleness.

Consider this notion, this shift in perception of estate cars from being square to daring, and then place that thinking at the end of the strings that *Home Alone*'s Kevin attaches to those paint cans. Remember that? As the Wet Bandits climb the stairs, they're hit full in the face by an unexpected assault of hefty steel force. That's just what Barry's done with the exterior of this bug-eye. "It wears one-off, flared bolt-on arches," he says, "as well as a matte black roof and scoop, STI lower rear spoiler and carbon-fibre wing inlays." Those matte black signatures help to accentuate the moody look augmented by the tinted windows and rear lights, while those polarising and debate-sparking bolt-ons sit above an interesting choice of rims: Rota's Grid Drift is a wheel that, as the name suggests, is hot for drifting. How sideways can you get in a grip-focused all wheel-drive car? Ah, it depends on your driving style. However, you can't deny that it looks mean as hell.

But let's rewind for a moment here. Why do all of this to a wagon in the first place? "Ah, well, we originally built it for a customer," Barry concedes. "We put a huge amount of



Engine: EJ20 2.0-litre boxer four, fully forged bottom end, Manley con rods, Mahle pistons, ACL race bearings, Cosworth steel crank, Sard 1000cc injectors, TGV delete, enlarged intake manifold on large throttle body, Forge front-mount intercooler, oil cooler relocated to top of engine, Sard fuel pressure regulator, enlarged fuel pipes, A'PEXi AVCR boost controller, oil filter relocation kit, STI heads with Kent high lift race cams, billet individually-fed fuel rails, braided fuel lines, race fuel filter, Walbro fuel pump and inline Fuelab pump, air conditioning system removed, Samco hoses, Turbosmart twin-trumpet dump valve, polished hard pipe kit for FMIC, Cosworth timing belt with anti-slap bracket and damper, Kinugawa turbo with modified intake, anti-surge and one-off billet impeller wheel inline, Ramair air filter, lightened flywheel, map sensor converted to 5bar, lightweight front pulley set, 5" to 3.5" exhaust system, nitrous oxide system plumbed to purge kit venting in front of intercooler, underbonnet airbrushing and colour-coding

Transmission: Close-ratio gearbox, short-shift billet gear linkage, synthetic gear oil, five-paddle racing clutch

Chassis: 9.5x18" Rota Grid Drifts, Bridgestone Potenza S001s, BC Racing coilovers, front and rear strut braces and lower support brace, D2 Racing eight-pot calipers (front) with ceramic brake pads, split rotor-to-bell discs, braided lines, Dot 5.1 brake fluid, STI calipers (rear) with EBC YellowStuff pads, Tarox discs, braided lines and colour-coded bells

Exterior: Large bonnet scoop conversion, Morette quad headlamps, tinted rear lamps, STI lower rear spoiler, rally mudflaps, one-off flared and bolted arches, matte black roof and scoop, tinted windows, carbon-fibre wing inlays, Benen tow hook

Interior: Sparco steering wheel, STI seats, triple dash pod mount, volt gauge, boost gauge, water temp gauge, air/fuel ratio meter, A'PEXi AVCR display, Alpine Type X 10" subwoofer, retrimmed boot, Digital Class D amplifier, Kicker door speakers, Alpine head unit, DVD and Bluetooth kit

Contacts/thanks: Steve McCann, C&C Custom Exhausts, anyone involved with the car and of course all the boys – you know who you are!



The intercooler may now sit up front, but the top-mounted oil cooler means the bonnet scoop still serves a purpose

“We work with all aspects of vehicle enhancement, and take pride in our work as we take pride in our own cars”



time and effort into the build for him, into many individual aspects that make the car what it is today. I have to admit that I grew increasingly attached to the car throughout the time that we were building it, until it got to the stage that a deal was struck and I bought it for myself, adding more of my own touches to complete the car as I envisioned it to be; today I use it for taking to shows, demonstrating what we as a business can do.

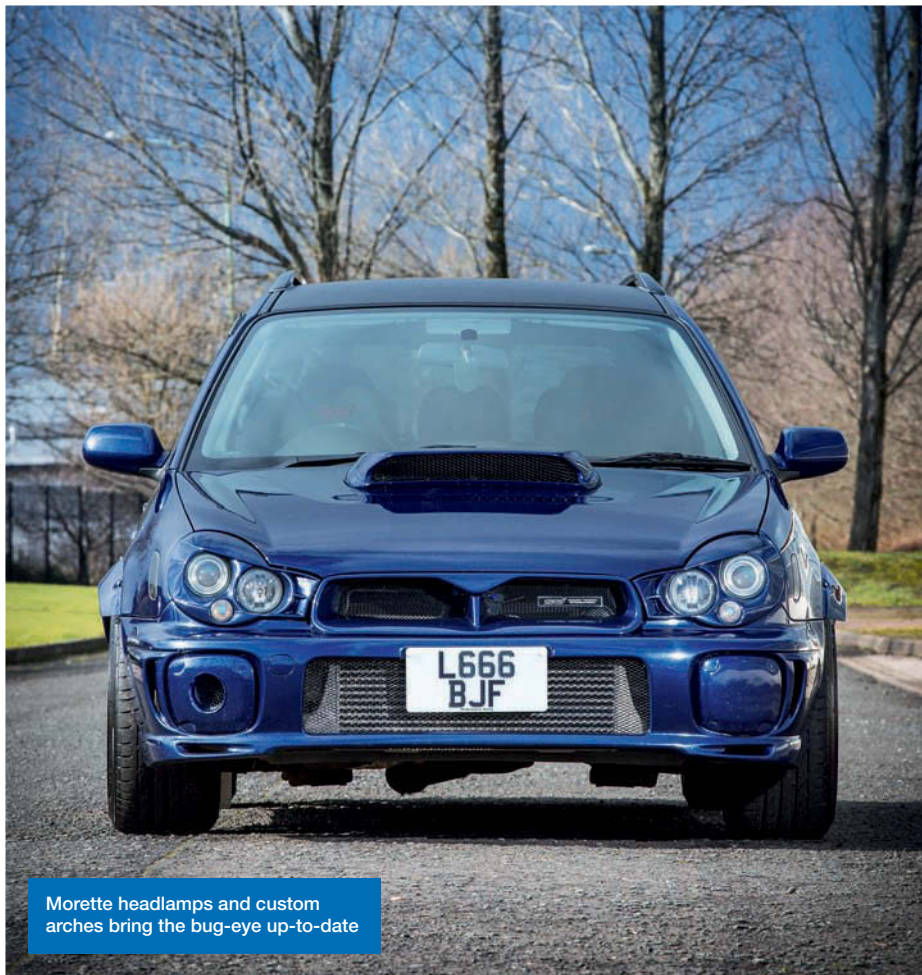
“I’ve been running BJT Performance Tuning for four years now,” he continues, “and we specialise in vehicle remapping and, well, anything performance really – from building a race-prepared engine to fitting a stereo, we work with all aspects of vehicle enhancement, and take pride in our work as we take pride in our own cars.” Barry’s acquisition of the Impreza perfectly demonstrates this mindset – having become so attached to the car they were building, despite it being an arguably less desirable bug-eye estate (apologies,

opinions may vary, read the small print, etc), the pride in the craft made it hard to let go. And as you pore over the photos and the spec list, you really can see why.

So, we said we’d get to the turbo. Okay, what we’re looking at is a work-of-art Kinugawa unit, working in conjunction with an A’PEXi AVCR boost controller and, continuing that aforementioned belt-and-braces approach, an HKS turbo timer. But it’s not enough to simply bolt on a big-ass snail and see what happens, you’ve got to think about what’s going on further down the line. Remember, an internal combustion engine is simply a means to harness kinetic energy by creating relentless efficient explosions, and that involves getting the right amount of air and fuel into it to match whatever dreamy boost levels you may have in mind. “The motor’s running 1000cc Sard injectors and a TGV delete, as well as enlarged fuel pipes, an enlarged intake manifold on a bigger throttle

body, and billet individually-fed fuel rails,” Barry explains. “And just for fun, there’s a Turbosmart twin-trumpet dump valve – the loudest dump valve you can get!” This all makes perfect sense – like the Matchbox cars that Kevin leaves on the floor as a nine-year-old boy’s version of the timeworn banana skin, this raucous embellishment acts as a superlative surprise tactic for the unsuspecting passer-by. If the big arches, flaring scoop and sense of menace pass you by, that shouty sneeze on upshifts won’t.

This McCallister mischief continues into the interior, where we find tombstone STI seats joined by more gauges than you can shake the proverbial stick at – Barry’s understandably keen to keep an eye on that intricately crafted engine’s vital signs, given the amount of love that’s been poured into it – and onward throughout the chassis. The brakes, for example, are as vast and intimidating as Old Man Marley’s snow



Morette headlamps and custom arches bring the bug-eye up-to-date

shovel, the devastating eight-pot D2s crushing speed like Harry and Marv's bare feet on baubles. The BC Racing coilovers are the perfect buddies for the copious bracing that's been added throughout the chassis, ensuring that this wagon knows nothing of wallow or flex. It's laser-guided, nothing less.

One of the most memorable scenes in *Home Alone* features Kevin's mother's moment of realisation on the aeroplane, her face twisted in a mask of maternal panic. And, by a neat coincidence, that's exactly the face that Barry's passengers pull when he switches on the laughing gas. Oh yes, that rock-solid engine with its exotic turbo and fancy internals just wasn't enough for our headstrong protagonist – there's nitrous oxide coursing through the bug-eye's veins as well. But of course. And don't go thinking he's finished developing the project either... when a star like this goes off the rails, there's no telling what could happen next 🌸

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1 Featured: "Ultimate" Intercooler Kit

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[UP THE BRACKET]

What exactly is bracket drag racing? There was only one way to find out: by heading up to Santa Pod's Dial-in Day and getting stuck in for ourselves!

Words: Sam Preston

Photos: Ian Blackett and Sam Preston





As I anxiously drove to Northamptonshire's famous Santa Pod drag strip for my first taste of some competitive straight-line fun, the nerves really kicked in as it struck me that I had little idea what I was letting myself in for.

The venue's Dial-in Day is run once a year for beginners to get their first taste of competitive drag racing, along with allowing the pros to let their hair down and have some

fun. I'd wanted to get my Honda Civic on to the strip while it was still standard, and Phil Bennett from Santa Pod promised me that this event was the perfect introduction.

Like a lot of you out there, I had very little previous knowledge of the concept of bracket drag racing. How could an event where you're not allowed to go faster than a certain time be any fun? I was about to answer this question and many more as I discovered just how addictive this sport can become...



What is bracket racing?

A long and informative briefing with Ian Marshall from Santa Pod Racers' Club did wonders in soothing mine and several others' nerves before we kicked off. During the talk, Ian covered everything we'd need to know about bracket racing, from getting our cars set up properly on the start line through to nailing the perfect gear changes up the strip.

The concept of bracket drag racing is a simple one, although we thoroughly recommend having a go yourself to really understand why it's become so popular.

After two qualifying runs, the driver then looks at the times they've managed up the strip and estimates their 'dial in' time based on these. This is a time for them to aim for in the upcoming elimination rounds; the closer these run times are to their dial in time, the better. Performing a faster run than their dial in time, however, will result in a 'break out';

instantly knocking them out of that round.

Therefore bracket racing is all about consistency and clever tactics when choosing your dial-in time. Needless to say this isn't something you are likely to be an expert in overnight!

Keeping up so far? Good. We'll move on to the elimination rounds then. This is where the racer in the other lane comes into the equation. The guys at the start line will look at both you and your competitor's dial-in times, working out the difference between the two and letting the slower car set off this amount of time before the faster car. In theory, this means that the first to cross the finish line will win that round, providing that they do not break out. The person with the time closer to their dial in time will then continue through into the next round, and so it goes on until the final.



For more information on the rules, check out Santa Pod's website (www.santapod.co.uk) for a full explanation.

Bracket Racing Dial-in Day



Emphasis was certainly more on the 'having fun' end of the spectrum

Dial-in Day

Santa Pod's Dial-in Day was set under the gorgeous sunlight of early spring. The once-a-year event is a great stepping stone for those who are considering entering some of the competitive drag events throughout the year. Scoring was carried out in an official manner but there was very little pressure and the emphasis was certainly more on the 'having fun' end of the spectrum.

Along with a handful of petrol-gargling classic American muscle cars, there was also

a scattering of Japanese metal taking part. Mark Hatchard had come up from Dorset for the event in his long-term RX-7 project. Still sporting its twin-turbo setup, the car was nailing some impressive 14-second times before his rear differential unfortunately gave up the ghost.

Ric Markham was taking no prisoners in his stripped-out Toyota Carina. We are not entirely sure exactly what was going on under the bonnet of this unassuming beast but the

word 'nitrous' was certainly buzzing around throughout the day!

But surprisingly, the top runners seemed to mainly consist of large 4x4 machines, such as Gillian Medley in her Jeep Grand Cherokee and Perry Stephenson in an Isuzu Rodeo, illustrating perfectly that it doesn't matter how fast or sporty your car is for bracket racing; everyone is on an equal playing field with driving talent outshining almost all other aspects.



How can I get involved?

Although you've missed this year's Dial-in Day, there are still plenty of ways to get involved in drag racing events.

Santa Pod often runs extremely affordable 'Run What Ya Brung' days; a chance for you to hit the strip for a fraction of the price of your average track day. Although this is not bracket racing as such, it will give you a great chance to see if taking your car up the strip is something you'd like to peruse. Check out www.rwyb.co.uk for more information.

For those with a more competitive streak, the Sportsman bracket drag events held at drag strips up and down the country throughout the year are probably your best bet. With over 15 classes, there is a race series held for all car owners, from bone stock road cars through to fully fledged drag racers. This is known to be one of the most affordable ways to enter a competitive race season in the UK. Check out www.eurodragster.com to see how to take part 🌟



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HARDER BETTER FASTER STRONGER

Jorge Sandoval's Civics keep getting targeted by thieves – but every single time he comes back stronger. And hey, they won't be able to catch him in this one...

Words: Daniel Bevis
Photos: Adam Ivell





“It makes me happy that other people can enjoy what I like to refer to as ‘my kind of art’”



It's 3am. You hear a jangle, a clunk, a scrape. You flick on the lights and look out of the window, to see your pride and joy disappearing off down the street in a swirling miasma of dishonesty, crushed dreams and wasted effort. It's an unfortunate fact of life that, despite what *Sesame Street* would have you believe, this spinning blue-green rock isn't exclusively populated by friendly people. Some folks just aren't very nice.

Jorge Sandoval, owner of this racy K-swapped EG, has encountered his share of lowlifes over the years, but he takes a sanguine approach. "I guess I should thank them," he says with a wry grin. "They made me learn that when they take from you, you come back harder."

So, let's get down to brass tacks, shall we? What is it about these Civics that's drawing in the maggots? "I started NSIDIUS Industries in 2012, with my long-time friend Mario Juarez," Jorge begins, laying the foundation for a tale of passion, loss and redemption. "Being huge car guys and having knowledge with 3D printing and CAD software, we set out to bring products that we felt either needed innovation or weren't available on the market, to give better options to car enthusiasts. We've been in business about three years now, and have found good success in the products we have but we plan to keep bringing new products as we grow." The store on their website showcases a

variety of proprietary shifters, wiring options, brake spacers and the like, but this relatively modest board of fare (and remember, it's growing all the time) belies the sheer, giddy levels of enthusiasm and expertise the guys have. And this Civic is the very embodiment of that.

It's the perfect project base for Jorge too, as a lifelong EG-generation Civic fan; indeed this is his third EG and it's received a lot of love at NSIDIUS. "So much of it is compatible with the Integra," he explains. "There are so many interchangeable parts, and so much potential for me to use my imagination."

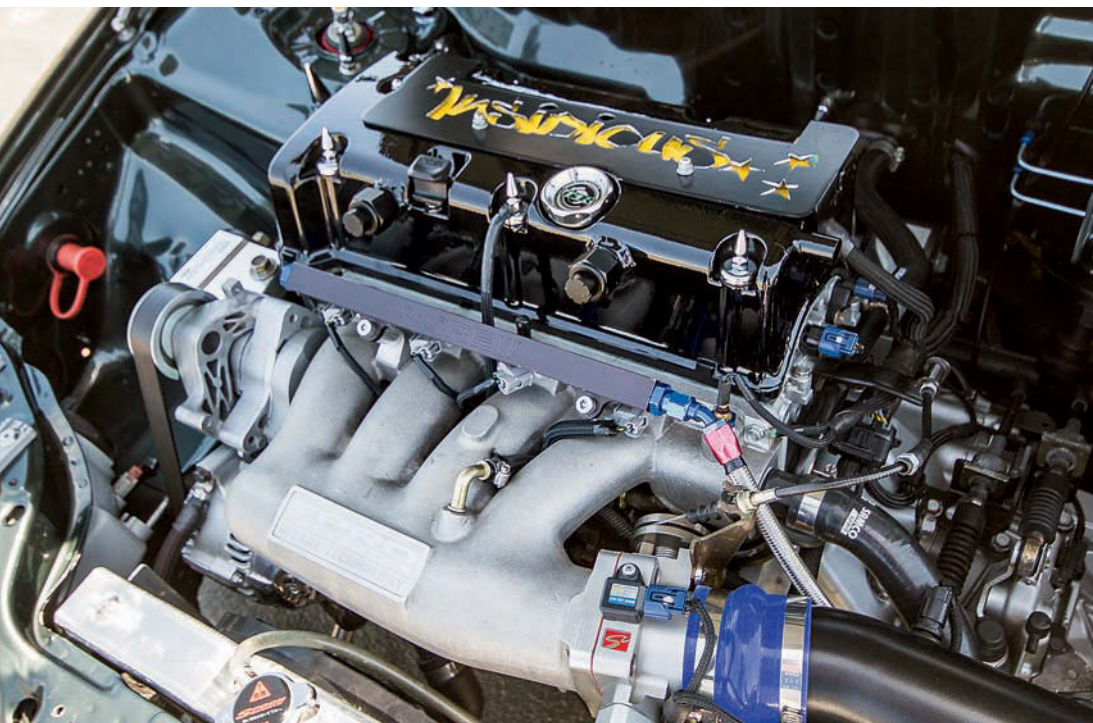
So what happened to the two EGs that preceded this one? Well, you know how we were talking about thieves and dishonesty...? "The first was stolen and stripped," he says, exasperated, "and the other was nearly stolen from my garage. I had a buddy staying over on that particular night, and he was up late when he heard the garage door open... he came and woke me up, and when I looked outside, my car was rolling down the driveway! So I jumped out of the window in my underwear with my fake gun – good thing they didn't know – screaming to get the heck out of my car, and the guys ran off!" That's a shocking wake-up, and not the sort of thing to inspire confidence in your fellow man. But again, it made Jorge come back better and brighter.

He'd been casually sizing up the idea of swapping a K20 motor into the EG before it nearly went walkabout, and this is an idea he

persevered with afterwards with some enthusiasm. "I wanted a K-swap because after building numerous big B series motors – a B18C, a 1.8 LS VTEC, a 2.0 sleeved LS VTEC – I wanted something that was a solid, reliable motor out-of-the-box," he says. "I had already felt what the power bands were like on the K20 motors and I fell in love instantly. Nothing compares to a screaming K20A at high rpm!"

So Jorge put his motorbike, a Honda CBR600RR, on various forums as a swap for a decent K20, and bided his time until the right offer came in. Eventually, such an offer came along from a guy with the right engine... the only snag being that it was already installed in an EG Civic. "I didn't like the idea at first, since I'd have preferred to put the K-swap in my car rather than take on a whole new one," Jorge recalls, "but as we started talking, it started to appeal to me as a better option since the motor was already in and running. We ended up working out a deal..." and so the games began.

"When I took delivery of the car it had a nice white paint job," he remembers, "but it didn't have any wheels, so I sourced some stock Integra Type R wheels from a friend. It was running a pretty much bone-stock K20A and a gutted interior. But the chassis was in great condition – no prior accidents, well maintained and it had a running K20, so it was the perfect platform to build my ultimate show/track/grocery-getter car."



Engine: Honda K20A 2.0-litre i-VTEC, Hasport engine mounts with race inserts, Blueprint Racing Stage 2 camshafts, Supertech valve springs and retainers, Karcepts cold air intake, Skunk2 70mm throttle body, Pro Series intake manifold, gasket and timing chain tensioner, K-Tuned TPS sensor and heater hoses, Walbro 255lph fuel pump, Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator, R-Crew fuel rail and exhaust manifold, Acura RDX 410cc injectors, carbon-Kevlar fuel pump cover, Apexi World Sport II exhaust, Badlandz Engineering 2.5" Y-pipe, NRG slim battery, hood dampers, C&R radiator, Samco Sport hoses, modified valve cover with oil catch can bungs, Spoon Sports radiator cap, reservoir socks, T1R oil cap, R-Crew K-swap engine harness, Hondata K-Pro

Transmission: OEM K20A Type R transmission with 4.7 final drive, 36mm Acura axles, Competition Clutch Stage 4 six-puck clutch, Buddy Club shifter box, Karcepts shifter plate

Chassis: 7x16" +42 Volk Racing TE37 (or optional 7x15" 5Zigen FN01R with 24.5-inch slicks for drag racing), Skunk2 Black Series lug nuts, ARP wheel studs, 36mm JDM ITR five-lug swap, Spoon Sports front brake calipers, Hawk HPS pads, Earl's stainless steel brake lines, DC5 brake master cylinder, NSIDIUS Industries 3mm disc spacers, DBA front discs, custom brake line tuck, Function & Form Type 2 coilovers with Swift Springs, OEM ITR 22mm front and rear anti-roll bars, Spoon Sports rear strut brace, Function7 rear lower control arms, Buddy Club front camber control arms, Skunk2 rear camber control arms, Omni Power rear spherical bearings, Benen Industries rear B- and C-pillar bars, Comptech subframe brace, K-Tuned traction bars



Exterior: Wings West RS front lip, Livesports EG6 rear wing, BMW Highland green metallic paint, JDM OEM EG6 headlights, SiR clear corners, FAL rear windows, OEM thin side mouldings, Vision mirrors, Golden Eagle towhook, shaved engine bay

Interior: Recaro Le Mans seats, Benen Industries harness bar, Spoon Sports steering wheel, NSIDIUS Industries gear knob and gear extender, NRG steering hub with quick release, JDM OEM EG6 SiR gauge cluster, console, coin pocket and amber clock armrest, custom confetti-print door panels and armrest fabric, JDM ITR five-piece floor mats, Mugen ECU stay, Alpine head unit, Type R speakers

Contacts/thanks: I would like to thank all of my team-mates from Team NSIDIUS, DynoSpotRacing for the dyno tune, my family for supporting me with my passion, Adam at 6twt01 for the photoshoot, Raul at CheckerdSports, Frank at Downstar, all those thieves that made me learn that when they take something from you, you come back harder, and any one person that has taken the time to read this article and heard my story about my passion for cars – I hope it can serve as inspiration



The old EG in the garage was duly offloaded to make room for the new arrival. With a clear head and a focused plan, Jorge set about tackling what he saw as one of the key facets of the build: the paint.

Yeah, we know what you're thinking. Didn't he just say that it had a nice new paint job already? "I got tired of seeing so many white hatchbacks out there," he laughs. "I wanted to put my own stamp on it, do something individual, so I decided to paint it in my favourite colour – green. I stripped the car down to bare metal and dropped it off at the paint shop for a few coats of BMW Highland green." This is a shade that you're most likely to find on the X3 or X5, but it suits the little Honda to a tee, doesn't it?

Having bought himself six months in which to prepare for the rest of the build, Jorge set about squirrelling away some parts. New

camshafts, valvetrain, intake manifold, throttle body and velocity stack intake netted him 237bhp on the dyno, while a six-puck clutch mated to the K20A Type R gearbox ensured that the system would be robust enough to cope. The shopping list for the interior included those outrageous Recaro Le Mans seats, matched with complementary confetti-print doorcards, copious shiny brace bars, and a general absence of clutter. So when the shell arrived back home, it was a case of bolting it all together, throwing on some lurid yellow Volks with vast brakes behind them, suspending the whole thing on a fantasy wishlist of coilovers and chassis upgrades, and taking it to the track (okay, 'simply' may be overstating it, but you get the idea).

"I've used the car at the dragstrip a few times – I ran a best of 12.7 on the quarter-mile – but mostly I do track days at Thunder

Hill Raceway and Buttonwillow," Jorge smiles. "People tend to have a real admiration for the simplicity of it, yet how much it stands out and grabs your attention. It makes me happy that other people can enjoy what I like to refer to as 'my kind of art'."

And has this Civic exorcised the demons of the past, rekindling Jorge's faith in humanity? "Well, I've had my share of bad luck with theft on this one too," he sighs. "I parked it at the grocery store, and came out to find that someone had stolen my rare Spoon Sports tow hook! And in another instance I drove to central California for a car show and overnight someone stole my Kevlar Backyard Special spoiler! But at least the car was still there..."

Life keeps throwing him these curveballs, but he still keeps knocking them out of the park. You just can't keep a good man down, can you? 🍀



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It's a great experience when you fit an aftermarket part and instantly feel a difference in performance. Depending on the part in question, feeling an improvement can often be tricky. Your mind sometimes plays tricks on you, almost like the placebo effect; you think you can detect a change, but there's little if no physical evidence to support your thinking. So, to truly test its effectiveness, we decided to fit our recent performance additive on a Car Limits action day (full coverage on p120) organised by the RX-8 Owners' Club...

The RX-8 possesses a beautifully balanced platform from the production line. Its handling is predictable and progressive in almost every situation, meaning you're rarely caught out. With plenty of track action planned throughout 2015 though, we were after a little more chassis rigidity, particularly from the front end. The motivation behind this was reducing body roll and improving turn-in around tight, twisty corners with rapid changes of direction. The Banzai/Pettit Racing Mazda's chassis remains very supple, even with Pettit Racing coilovers fitted, and we didn't want to lose this characteristic by setting the suspension to its hardest settings. A strut brace was the first port of call.

There are so many options on the market it's hard to choose which, if any, would help. The RX-8 even comes with a strut brace, albeit a spindly one, as standard. As you can

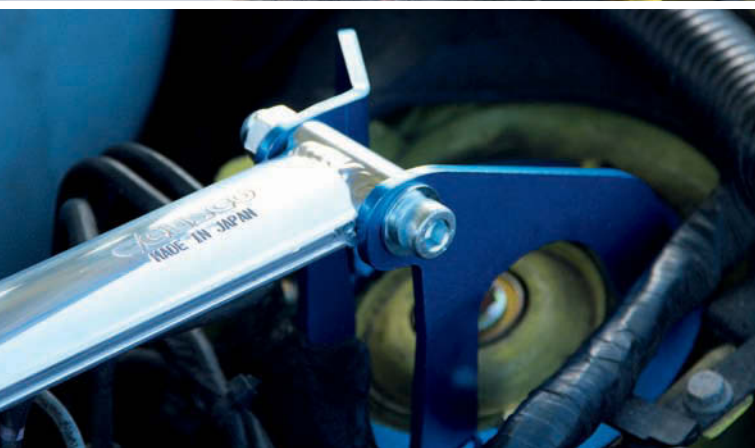
see from the photos though, we opted for a Cusco brace and there were a number of main reasons for doing so. The first is the high-end construction and finish of the bar and its end brackets. The bar itself is significantly heavier than standard with its welds being top-notch. The same is true of the brackets, which are of course finished in that iconic blue coating.

The second reason for going with Cusco was the item's integrated brake brace. The bracket for the driver's side strut top incorporates an adjustable bolt with a red anodised disc the presses firmly against the Mazda's brake master cylinder. Under normal road conditions this would do next to nothing, but the idea is that when the middle pedal is stamped on firmly, the reduced cylinder movement provides a more predictable pedal feel. There's only one way to find out if it works!

We'd spent the morning out on the North Weald Tarmac, competing against other RX-8 owners in timed runs around coned circuits. Over the lunch period though, we swapped the braces over with Robbie from Pettit Racing's help. If the operation were to be outlined in a Haynes workshop manual it'd be a half spanner job. It's that easy. It took just 20 minutes.

So we lined up for the first run, not expecting huge differences if we're honest, but we couldn't have been more mistaken! The circuit we were on sees you launch and accelerate hard around a gentle sweeping left-hander. First and second gears are quickly dispatched with and you're midway





through third before it's hard on the brakes for a tight left hairpin. On previous runs we'd learned to enter the hairpin slowly, get the car turned in and be patient before getting on the throttle, otherwise the front end was just pushing on.

With the brace fitted though, we jumped on the brakes and instantly felt a firmer pedal under our foot. In fact, pedal travel was probably cut by about a third! The nose also turned in much more sharply and as we continued to apply brake pressure, the RX-8's rear end began to come around, the whole car almost pivoting on its front wheels. We therefore had the Mazda pointing in the right direction much more quickly, allowing us to jump on the gas significantly earlier. Wow! What a difference!

As we continued to play, it soon became apparent the increased precision of the front end was benefiting us hugely with our exit speeds and overall times. It became easier to balance the car on the throttle on exit, but also easier to hold huge power slides out of the corners. While not the quickest way to navigate North Weald, it was by far the most fun and we were finding it hard to resist travelling everywhere sideways!

It's hard to believe the difference the high-quality Cusco strut brace has made to the RX-8's handling. We can't recommend it enough. At £238.80 for the brake brace version, it's not the cheapest option, but once you've driven your vehicle hard on track with one fitted, you'll know you've spent wisely. You can order them directly though Pettit Racing 🍀

Above: The quality of the Cusco item was clear to see straight away

Below: Driving the RX-8 with the new brace fitted was instantly more rewarding



OUR CARS



SAM PRESTON EP3 HONDA CIVIC TYPE R

Comments?

Contact me at spreston@unity-media.com

If you've read our feature on Santa Pod's bracket racing Dial-in Day (p92), you'll already have an idea of what I've been up to this month. If not, go and check it out now! I'd been itching to see how my Civic would perform on a quarter-mile drag strip for some time. Heading to somewhere like Santa Pod is a great way to safely get to know your car on the limit – split-second reaction times and quick decision-making are vital, so you need to feel comfortable in your car to get the best results.

I won't dwell too much on the specifics of the day; all you need to know is that bracket racing is a complicated but very addictive sport. The afternoon was another big eye-opener into the capabilities of my humble little car, which yet again performed nothing but impeccably.

With detailed instructions and guidance from the Santa Pod guys, my vision of doing tyre-popping burnouts before my run and giving the car a million revs as I waited for the green light to show was quickly given something of a reality check. When running road tyres and in a front-wheel drive car, it's actually counter-productive to give it much more than idle revs on your launch, as doing so will only result in you sitting on the spot



Contact:

Santa Pod Raceway
www.rwyb.co.uk/dialin.php



with your wheels spinning beneath you. Keeping your right foot in check, though, is easier said than done, especially with the adrenaline-packed red mist falling over you at the starting line.

It became increasingly apparent throughout my time at Santa Pod that there's so much more to drag racing than just booting your car off the lights. As mentor Ian Marshall told us during our briefing, it is an art form that people often spend their whole lives perfecting. The more runs I did, the more in tune with my EP3 I'd like to think I became, with the times dropping accordingly. Buzzing through the slick-shifting 'box felt fantastic and cemented my beliefs that this car is nothing short of awesome, especially on the limit.

By the end of the day, my car became one of the fastest front-wheel drive cars present, with more than one person asking me what modifications I'd carried out on it! My best time was 15.1 seconds; which after a browse around on the forums appears to be spot-on for a standard Civic Type R. This

Below: Two very different ways to travel 1320ft in a smidge over 15 seconds



proved to be a faster time than such cars as a 2008 Ford Fiesta ST, and only a shade slower than a Jaguar XK8. Needless to say, I'm very proud of the way it performed.

Joining me on the day was sister publication *Performance BMW*'s editor Elizabeth. With an E39 540 V8-powered automatic BMW as her weapon of choice, I was interested to see how my car would fare against this very different specimen. We guessed that although the cars offer very different ways of delivering their power, their quarter-mile runs were likely to be close. It turns out we were right; with both cars recording identical best times of 15.1 seconds! It's probably worth noting that were the strip to be any longer than it was, Elizabeth would have left me in a trail of V8-infused dust, as this was the moment her car really seemed to come into full swing...

That just leaves me room to give a big thank you to Phil and the guys at Santa Pod for making us feel so welcome and offering us invaluable tips throughout the day to shave time off our runs 🌸

Contact:

Spoon Sports EU
www.spoonsports.eu
or 01934 751085



JAMES RUDECKI/ SPOON SPORTS EU ZF1 HONDA CR-Z

Comments? Contact me at
info@spoonsportseurope.net

Hi, I'm James and I'm attempting to turn my ex-lease Honda CR-Z road car into a competitive hybrid racer with the help of the guys at Spoon Sports EU. Whist the CR-Z will be packed with Spoon goodies, including some one-off parts, there will be many new innovations and challenges to overcome along the way. I'll bring you updates on my progress throughout the coming months.

I've always favoured Honda. In my early teens, my focus was drawn to Honda motorbikes and working with my dad to restore some classics. I was always impressed by the brilliant engineering and focus put towards giving the rider/driver the best experience possible. I've been a fan of Spoon for a similar amount of time. Since *Gran Turismo 2* in fact, when I was always favouring its EK9 Civic and S2000 models.

Then in 2010 came the CR-Z. I was intrigued by its futuristic looks and IMA hybrid system. After one test drive it was clear that this was the car for me and the beginning of the journey which leads us to this build.

Although the CR-Z doesn't have hundreds of horses, there is something about this car which makes it so brilliant to drive, and after

learning of Spoon Japan's ventures with this often misunderstood car I was determined to create something similar for the UK to admire. Something to change the image of this car and promote the excellent workmanship and quality of Spoon Sports. After visiting the famous Type One shop over in Japan recently it is clear to me that there is something missing in the UK tuning scene and I think that truly understanding Spoon frontman Ichishima-san's philosophy goes a great deal towards filling that void; I hope my CR-Z will demonstrate that here in the UK!

Meeting the Type One guys a couple of weeks ago really inspired me with this build and I would like to say thanks for all the time they spent with me and the questions they answered.

On returning to the UK, the decision to enter the CARTEK Roadsports Endurance Series was made. This race series travels across the UK, with the class structure based on power-to-weight ratios. Although likely more a setup and data collection exercise than anything else, I'm sure it will be hugely enjoyable and prove the CR-Z as a serious contender. My partner in crime will be my best friend Bobby who has already helped with the strip-down. We are awaiting the release of the series regulations within the next few weeks, but the build will include significant work to most aspects of the car, including the chassis, engine, drivetrain, suspension and brakes. We are really excited and will be working closely with Spoon Sports EU on this build so stay tuned for more build and race updates 🌸



James' CR-Z won't look like a road car for much longer...

PAUL COWLAND SUBARU BRZ

Comments?

Contact me at banzai@unity-media.com

As our wise old mums used to say: "You can't burn the candle at both ends." Very true. Start to take things to excess in the evenings, and I guarantee that your early morning performance will be severely below par. Tuning's a bit like that when you start to think about it – if you make big changes in one area, and start to move outside the safe parameters of the factory offering, other parts of the delicate equation start to feel the heat a little bit. And, on the long-suffering BRZ project, nowhere was this more apparent than with the brakes.

When the car was in standard trim, these simple-but-effective sliding calipers did an admirable job of pulling the couth coupé up four-square. Even on a couple of track outings early on in its life, they acquitted themselves well, only really starting to fade after several laps of harsh punishment. The addition of Hosetechnik lines had added a better pedal, and they were hanging in there. All commendable stuff for a showroom setup! However, once the EcuTek remap, stickier Toyo rubber and hearty Milltek exhaust had been thrown into the pot, it wasn't really fair to ask these parts to keep up with the rest of the gang. Besides, with even more track outings planned on the cards, I needed to have something a little more substantial out front.

Luckily for me, Italian braking legend Tarox was one step ahead of me, having released a simply stunning kit for the Toyobaru platform. Sensibly staying within a sensible disc size, they allow me to run the 17" track wheels when I want, and offer me all the stopping power I could ever shake a stick at – and looks that could stop traffic at 20 paces. Needless to say, I had to have them. I have used Tarox discs and pads on my Production GTI race car for the last three seasons, and they have helped me out-brake many a competitor to sneak a place here and there along the way, so I kind of felt I owed it to them, too...

The kit I went for is the ultimate compromise between track ability, street looks and sensible outlay (just under £1200 all-in, which I thought was very sensible). Featuring the track-proven 'Sport Compact' B32 six-piston upgrade out front, this beautifully engineered kit draws heavily on Tarox's extensive motorsport involvement, boasting a pair of large single piece grooved heat treated discs and the ability to withstand much greater heat and repeated application than the factory stoppers can



handle. Knowing well what the UK roads are like, Tarox has also sensibly added a special coating over its beautiful anodising to keep these calipers looking smart for years to come. Several colours are available, but I felt that the red would tie in with all the recent interior upgrades, as well as lifting the fairly monochromatic exterior of the car.

As easy as Tarox stuff is to fit, I thought it better to accept an invitation from my good friend Kevin Poole, who in-between prepping and running race and track cars for the likes of Milltek Sport and GT ace Tom Onslow-Cole, has opened a rather smart tuning shop under the name of G&A Performance. With the offer to pop down for a brew, a catch-up, and the chance to get my new brakes fitted while we checked out his impressive new unit, how could I say no?

This new kit comes with all bolts, uprights and washers, and it has clearly been designed to literally drop on to the car. Kev's boys had the old ones off and the new ones on in about half an hour (that's race techs for you!) and were soon bleeding them through to swiftly get a perfect pedal. The new Tarox calipers use OEM banjos, so the swanky Hosetechnik lines went straight back on too. You can tell this has all been put together by people that are at the top of their game, as no adjustment or shimming was needed. After a quick bedding-in session on the local back roads, Kev threw me the keys and told me to go and try it all out.

Even though the pads and discs were still 'green' and therefore I wasn't really leaning on them too hard, it was immediately

This month, Paul focuses on the stoppers on his ex-development BRZ

BANZAI



'Sport Compact' six-piston calipers perform as well as they look



Contact:

Tarox
www.tarox.co.uk
 G&A Performance
www.gaperformance.com or
 @gaperformance (Twitter)



obvious that I had just arrived at 'big school' in brake terms. The initial bite was far more evident, but also, these new stoppers could seriously haul the thing down from a stop if you really leant on them. Talk about giving you confidence as you really start to press on. These brakes have taken several metres out of the car's stopping distance at any speed – and seem fade-proof, even after several repeated applications.

All-in-all it was a morning well spent. G&A is well worth your time if you're anywhere near Northants and need anything from a service to a full makeover, and Tarox seem to have knocked it out of the park yet again.

So that's me happy then. They look great, they work fantastically – and I'm ready for a serious track outing. Now, where should I go, do you think? 🌟





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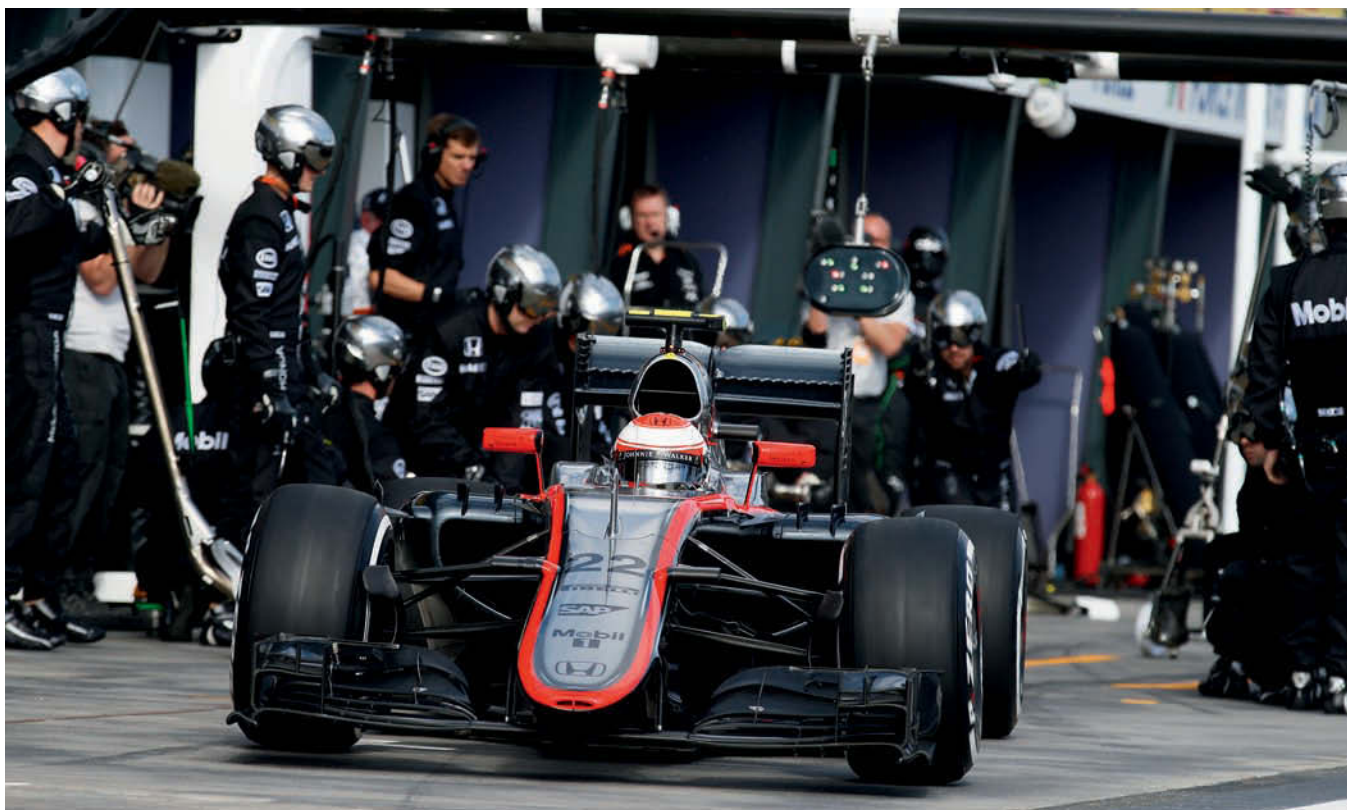
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McLAREN/HONDA SHOWS PROMISE DURING PROBLEM-RIDDLED AUSTRALIAN GP

So, racing is finally underway in the world of F1 and we've had our first glimpse of the 2015 cars and the potential they may hold for the rest of the season.

The McLaren/Honda team didn't have the best build-up to this championship, with a tough winter of limited testing time followed by Alonso's pre-season crash which forced him out of racing the first leg in Australia.

Predictably, reigning champion Mercedes stole the show during race one, the one-two force of Hamilton and Rosberg a crushing 33 seconds clear of any opposition by the end of the gruelling event.

The race was fraught with problems as

teams got to grips with new cars and new regulations; not least McLaren/Honda who lost stand-in driver Magnussen on the pre-race warm-up lap due to engine failure, in turn striking out one of Alonso's precious allocated engines as a result.

It's perhaps for this reason that Button and the team claimed to agree to take things steady for the remainder of the race, eventually finishing 11th out of the mere 11 cars to make it to the finish line.

Button was quick to reassure us that it's not all doom and gloom, however. "We're still a long way off but this is a good starting point and I enjoyed the race," he

commented. "I even had a good little battle with Checo [Perez]. Today also really helps in terms of development; if we'd done three laps, we'd have learned nothing, so we've learned a massive amount by completing a race distance. It was also a good opportunity for me to get used to the car and to play around with it, making adjustments in the cockpit. There's a lot of work still needed – on power, driveability, downforce and setup – but we can make big strides. And, by improving one area, it tends to snowball; more and more areas start to improve, too."

Contact: www.formula1.com



OLIVER TURVEY TO RACE NEW NSX IN SUPER GT

McLaren-Honda F1 test and development driver Oliver Turvey will be racing in the 2015 season of the Japanese Super GT championship in Drago Modulo's spectacular-looking Honda NSX Concept GT race car.

The 27-year-old Brit will race alongside Takashi Kogure for the eight-round championship, with seven races held at some of Japan's biggest circuits and one at Thailand's Chang International Circuit.

"I love Japanese culture and have been really impressed by the passion for

motorsport in the country," Turvey explained. "The Super GT championship offers a very high level of competition with many experienced and successful drivers and it will be a great challenge for me.

"Racing for Honda is also a fantastic opportunity. To join one of the most historic motorsport manufacturers in the world is a real privilege and an honour."

We're looking forward to seeing more of this fantastic looking NSX racer on the track soon!

Contact: www.supergt.net



CHILTON TO PILOT GT-R IN SHIFT FROM F1 TO P1

Young Brit ex-F1 star Max Chilton will be part of the driving force behind Nissan's upcoming GT-R LM NISMO campaign in this season's WEC. Alongside celebrated endurance racer and fellow Brit Alex Buncombe, the pair will pilot the controversial front-wheel drive GT-R-based cars in this year's World Endurance Championship, which includes the fabled 24 Hours of Le Mans event.

"My aim has always been to race at the highest level and the technology that has gone into the Nissan GT-R LM NISMO is as impressive as a Formula One car. Having met

with the team and seen first-hand the dedication and desire to win that exists within this project I can't wait to get back on track," Chilton commented.

Chilton gained a name for himself during his two years in F1 thanks to his thorough and safe approach to racing, meaning that he finished every single race in his debut season. Nissan will no doubt be hoping for some consistent results from this young racer to accumulate as many points as possible throughout the year.

Contact: www.fiawec.com



2015 MOTORSPORT CALENDAR

APRIL

17-19	Formula 1 Bahrain
17-19	WTCC Morocco
18-19	D1 Odaiba
18-19	BTCC Donington Park
25	Classic Time Attack Cadwell Park
25	Time Attack Cadwell Park
25-26	Civic Cup Brands Hatch Indy
25-26	Jap Drag Series Santa Pod

MAY

1-3	WTCC Hungary
1-3	Formula 1 Korea
8-9	Formula Drift Road Atlanta
9-10	BTCC Thruxton
8-10	Formula 1 Spain
14-17	Nürburgring 24hrs Nürburgring
15-16	WTCC Germany
16-17	VTEC Challenge Rockingham
16-17	D1 Suzuka
22-24	Formula 1 Monaco
23-24	Civic Cup Croft
31	Classic Time Attack Snetterton
31	Time Attack Snetterton

JUNE

4-6	ERC Portugal
5-6	Formula Drift Orlando
5-7	WTCC Russia
5-7	Formula 1 Canada
6-7	BTCC Oulton Park
13-14	BDC Knockhill
17-18	BTCC Croft
19-21	WTCC Slovakia
19-21	Formula 1 Austria
20-21	Super GT Thailand
21	Classic Time Attack Brands Hatch
21	Time Attack Brands Hatch
25-27	ERC Belgium
26-27	Formula Drift Wall Speedway
26-28	WTCC France
27-28	VTEC Challenge Snetterton
27-28	D1 Tsukuba

JULY

3-5	Formula 1 UK
5	Jap Drag Series Santa Pod
10-12	WTCC Portugal
11	Classic Time Attack Oulton Park
11	Time Attack Oulton Park
11-12	BDC Teesside
17-19	ERC Estonia
18-19	Civic Cup Anglesey
18-19	VTEC Challenge Castle Combe
24-26	Formula 1 Hungary

AUGUST

1-2	Jap Drag Series Santa Pod
1-2	D1 Ebisu
8-9	BTCC Snetterton
16	BDC Rockingham
21-23	Formula 1 Belgium
22	Classic Time Attack Croft
22	Time Attack Croft
22-23	VTEC Challenge Brands Hatch
22-23	Civic Cup Silverstone
22-23	BTCC Knockhill
28-30	ERC Czech Republic
29-30	Super GT Suzuka

SEPTEMBER

4-6	Formula 1 Italy
5-6	D1 Maishima
5-6	BTCC Rockingham
6	BDC Silverstone
11-13	WTCC Japan
12-13	Civic Cup Snetterton 300
18-20	Formula 1 Singapore
19	Classic Time Attack Rockingham
19	Time Attack Rockingham
19-20	BDC Anglesey
19-20	Super GT Sugo
25-27	WTCC China
25-27	Formula 1 Japan
25-27	ERC Cyprus
26	VTEC Challenge Mallory Park
26-27	BTCC Silverstone

OCTOBER

3-4	Civic Cup Donington
9-11	ERC Greece
9-11	Formula 1 Russia
10-11	BTCC Brands Hatch GP
11	Jap Drag Series Santa Pod
17-18	VTEC Challenge Donington
23-25	Formula 1 USA
24-25	D1 Odaiba
30-1Nov	WTCC Thailand
30-1Nov	Formula 1 Mexico
31-1Nov	Super GT Autopolis

NOVEMBER

5-7	ERC France
13-15	Formula 1 Brazil
20-22	WTCC Qatar
27-29	Formula 1 Abu Dhabi

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DAN GOODMAN MITSUBISHI EVO IV

Evo IVs currently represent fantastic value for money for those looking for a rally-bred, four-wheel-drive saloon – especially if you can find one finished to such a high standard as this one from Dan Goodman.

Dan took the standard car and resprayed it in the stunning OEM hue of Issel Blue Pearl before cracking on with the engine mods. Upgrades include forged pistons, a Walbro fuel pump and a turbocharger from an Evo VI, all of which mean the Evo is now good for around 300whp – not a figure to be smirked at!

The interior hasn't been left untouched either, as a stroke of genius has resulted in Dan replacing the trim for that from an Evo VI, topped off with a classy Nardi Torino steering wheel. We love seeing Evos with tasteful mods, such as Dan's here, which we're sure will stand the test of time. Nice work!



LUKE TIMMS NISSAN 180SX

You may have already witnessed Luke's insane S13 sliding around a race track at one of the many shows it appeared at last year but we wanted to know a little more about the work that's gone into this extremely impressive build.

Gone is the four-cylinder engine to make room for the monstrous 1UZ-FE V8 unit from a Lexus LS 400, mated to a sturdy W58 gearbox from a Supra. The tubbed arches and full body kit accommodate the Rota Journey rims, where you'll also find a set of eight-pot K Sports nestled under the front corners. Handy with a welder, Luke has fully stitch-welded the engine bay and fabricated a comprehensive roll-cage. Most impressive of all, though, is that every bit of work carried out on the car was done on Luke's driveway, highlighting that he is a man of many talents!

The main plan for 2015 is to install a supercharger to bring power up into the region of 450whp, so watch out for this beauty on track!



DANIEL SMITH HONDA CRX

JDM fans from Malta are always keen to represent their thriving car scene and this month is no exception with Daniel's imported Del Sol taking centre stage this time around.

The 1994 example was picked up a year ago as a completely stock, 28,000-mile car, with Daniel taking the time to add some premium bits to create this fabulous little coupé. Some sensibly sized Volk wheels add a subtle sporty feel, with a Spoon Sports front lip originally designed for an EG-shaped Civic also cleverly adding a little more aggression to the look of the car.

Some Bride Low Max buckets and a classic Nardi steering wheel are shown off in all their glory once the roof is off, which we imagine is quite a lot in Malta!

Future plans include dropping the standard engine for a B16A2 lump, although Daniel is more than pleased with the way the car is behaving at the moment, telling us it's never missed a beat despite being 21 years old.



GEORGE RICHARDSON NISSAN SKYLINE

It's virtually impossible to remember all of the special edition versions of Japanese cars that have been made over the years and George's 60th Anniversary R32 GTST is certainly one that slipped under the radar.

The super-rare 2WD Skyline celebrates 60 years of Nissan, and comes with leather seats, foglights and, perhaps more interestingly, a special edition key and a super-fine coating of paint as standard. Gold badges were also an option!

Because George has managed to get his hands on such a rarity, it's understandable that he's kept modifications to a minimum. Some subtle Enkei RPF1 rims shod in premium rubber along with some Cusco coilovers were all this car needed to stand out, and we think it looks fantastic as a result.

George has sadly sold this car since getting in touch but said it would make him very happy to see a picture of his pride and joy in print. We hope your next car is equally as special, George!



NEIL QUINN TOYOTA YARIS

Neil is keen to stress from the start that his Yaris T-Sport daily driver is far from a fire-spitting, tyre-shredding monster but this doesn't limit his love for the little car one bit.

The exceptionally tidy motor has been treated to an array of TRD-inspired parts which add up to create a very tasteful package, illustrating Neil's cool, reserved style nicely.

Carbon fibre makes an appearance in the form of front and rear bumper inserts, an engine cover and headlight inserts, whilst under the bonnet a TRD air intake, 4-1 exhaust manifold and cat-back stainless steel exhaust system supply the NA motor with a very respectable 129bhp and 120lb ft of torque. The TRD theme continues to the chassis enhancements, where almost every aspect has been upgraded. We can't think of a much cooler little daily nipper than Neil's Yaris, especially when it's in arguably one of the best colours – Thunder grey.



IAN NOLLER MAZDA MX-3

The advert for this MX-3 read 'spares or repair' when Ian purchased it, due to a mysterious misfire that the previous owner had trouble diagnosing. Thankfully, a set of Magnecor leads and iridium spark plugs ironed out the problem, with the unusual 1.8-litre V6 engine singing happily once again after a decent service!

The mods didn't stop there, though, as the car was then drastically transformed with the body being Plasti Dip'd in a matt black hue which sets off the coupé's curves nicely.

A three-inch Sportex exhaust and Pipercross induction kit help the V6 roar more freely but Ian has plans to eventually replace the unit with a bigger KL-DE V6 engine to add even more 'zoom zoom' into the equation.

STREET LIFE



PASCAL FRANCK NISSAN SILVIA

This Belgian S15 is currently undergoing what owner Pascal describes as a 'transformation phase' but he was keen for us to see what it looked liked when it took part in last year's 'Streetgasm 2000' challenge.

Apart from the decals applied during the rally, the exterior remains fairly standard, with a set of Rota alloys letting the OEM lines do the talking. TEIN Super Street coilovers ensure the out-and-out sports car handles perfectly, while up front the SR20 engine now benefits from a smattering of upgrades to make the most out of the boosted power on tap. Watch out for the next phase of Pascal's build!



STEPHEN NICHOLS MITSUBISHI FTO

Stephen and friend Paul Brown, along with both men's sons, have managed to build up quite a relationship with their V6 FTO project since they bought it. So much so, that they've even named it 'Jiyu' (Japanese for 'Freedom').

Treating their car to an extensive list of modifications has helped the love affair grow stronger. Outside, some 17" Wolfrace rims are set off with a D Cuatro front lip along with tinted side repeaters and windows.

The already fairly pokey engine gets a K&N induction kit with full stainless steel exhaust system, whilst the interior has been lavished with a new sound system. We're pretty sure Stephen, Paul and their sons' love for this Mitsubishi is set to last a whole lot longer yet.



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Right: the instructors were keen to improve driving skill in any way they could



RX-8 LIMITS

To fully appreciate Mazda's RX-8 you've got to take one out on track. It's here the platform's beautiful 50:50 balance can be utilised and the rotary heart can truly sing. It's for this reason the RX-8 Owners' Club has an exceptionally busy 'Car Activity and Track Days' section on its forum.

The club's organisers are always busy arranging sprint events, track days and road trips to Europe's famous circuits. They've also teamed up with high-performance driver training expert, Car Limits, and setup a number of action days at North Weald Airfield throughout 2015. At just £55 per car (including lunch), these action days provide excellent value for money and allow you plenty of time behind the wheel to hone your skills and test the limits of your vehicle. With an RX-8 now on the *Banzai* fleet we signed up, along with Robbie Kazandjan from Pettit Racing, and headed to North Weald to see just what goes on at a Car Limits action day.

We arrived just in time for the scheduled 9:00am start. Robbie's reputation preceded him and he was fashionably late, much to the amusement of his fellow club members. In total, Car Limits restricts numbers to just 20 vehicles per day, the goal being to give drivers maximum track time. The morning starts with a 20-30 minute briefing. This means a wheel isn't turned in anger until 9:30, the reason being local residents complain if there's noise any earlier. Imagine that; buying a property next to an airfield and then complaining about the noise! Anyway, this gives the two instructors time to explain what will happen throughout the day, as well allowing for plenty of banter between club members. It's a very informal, light-hearted affair and

the RX-8 Owners' Club proved to be made up of a really good bunch.

Car Limits has access to a huge area of Tarmac, which used to be one end of North Weald's main runway. The layout has changed over the years, with this area once used as a big car park (hence the white lines we could see) before being utilised by Car Limits for driver training. The first activity sees all vehicles head up to the top section of the airfield. There's a long access road that joins the main section of Tarmac at around 90° and this is used for a high-speed cornering exercise. The instructors release you at the top of the access road, down which you accelerate hard, turning sharply left at the end. The idea is to use the drainage line down the centre of the main section of Tarmac as an invisible wall. This allows plenty of room for error should you come unstuck. This is where the 'car limits' part of the day comes in.

At 60mph, even the shonky old tyres on the yellow *Banzai*/Pettit RX-8 held up. You could feel the tired rubber scrabbling for grip on the damp, greasy, early morning North Weald surface but there was very little drama. "You're my hero," came the commendation from one of the instructors, "now try 65mph for the next run." Quietly confident, despite seeing two RX-8s spin ahead of us, we buried our right foot down the access road and got the Mazda settled at 65mph nice and early. Hugging the right-hand side of the access road, we turned in smoothly, looking to balance the car on the throttle, but out stepped the rear end. The RX-8 rarely snaps and bites you but in these conditions, on these tyres, the entry speed was just too hot. We tried to catch it with a whole lot of right lock and a heavy right foot, but despite an almighty slide the rear end got away from us, resulting in a



Our very own RX-8 proved to be a whole lot of fun when pushed to the limit

CLUB SCENE



A Car Limits day is a great chance for club members to catch up

very cool 360° spin. Straightaway, we could see the benefit of the RX-8 Owners' Club arranging this day. You get to find out exactly what you and your Mazda are capable of in a completely safe environment.

After everyone had got to grips with the high-speed bend, the group was divided into two. The Car Limits guys set up two separate tracks and each group spent the next hour or so at their assigned circuit before switching. The relaxed nature of the day meant that after that, all participants could come and go as they please, navigating both circuits or sticking with their preferred option.

The circuits were set out with cones in an almost autocross fashion and allowed for any number of racing lines to be followed. The challenge was finding your own line. Systematically altering your entry speeds and angles, as well as your braking, turn-in and exit throttling meant you could learn throughout the day. Every single lap was timed, allowing you to monitor your progress, giving you a sense of achievement by the close of play.

As has been highlighted, the Car Limits' focus really is on driver training and as such the instructors were assisting all those who wanted help throughout the event. They would sit in with you and help you select your lines and braking points. It was clear their focus was

on helping you improve, making the action day far more beneficial than a generic track day. In fact, this really is a great place to learn car control in a safe environment. It's an excellent way to build up your confidence and understanding of how your own car behaves when pushed to the limit.

We'd like to thank the RX-8 Owners' Club for organising the event. It was great to put the Mazda through its paces and catch up with club members in the process. In chatting with Robbie, we were in agreement the day provided the most car-related fun we'd had for quite some time. Congratulations to the guys from Essex Rotary for clocking the fastest time on the main circuit in their budget track car, and we also need to give a big shout out to Car Limits, too. The team is made up of pro race drivers and their willingness to share their experience really helps you advance personally as a driver. If you're part of a car club, we strongly recommend contacting the Car Limits office and seeing if you can set up similar days for your club. We'll be heading back soon and so should you...

CONTACT: Car Limits (www.carlimits.com or 01992 525750)
RX-8 Owners' Club (www.rx8ownersclub.co.uk)



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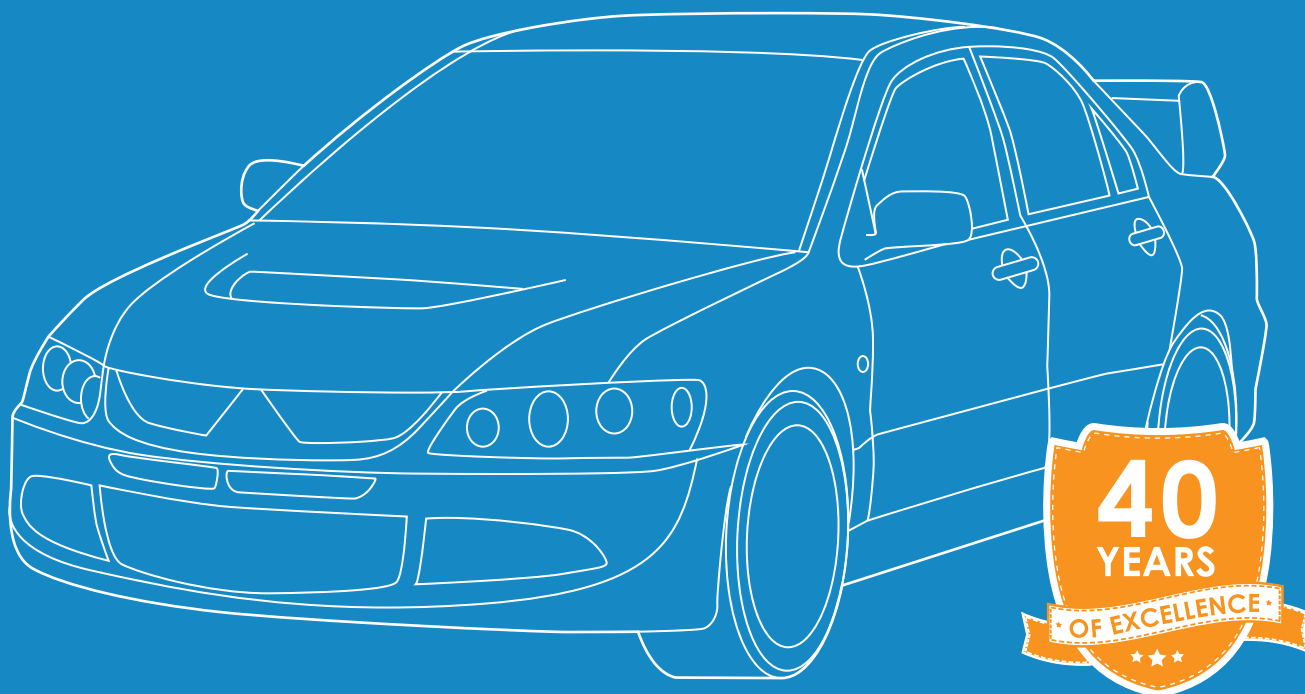
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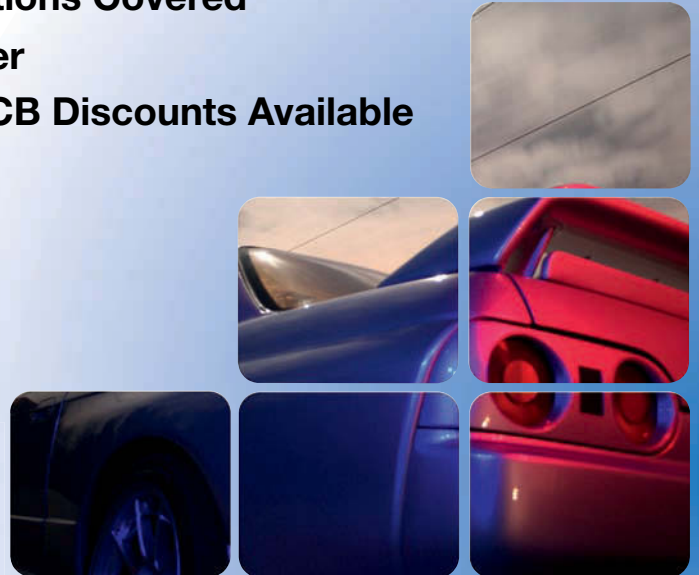
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